

## Irbid students stage protest

IRBID — (J.T.) Students of the Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST) on Monday boycotted a company that operates buses between Irbid and the university, which is located near the northern town of Ramtha, in protest against the company's refusal to increase the number of buses. The protest was also against the company's refusal to set up passenger sheds at bus stops and arrange for buses to operate at fixed hours. The students claim that the company had leased most of its buses to the pilgrims who visit Mecca to perform the Umra pilgrimage, leaving only eight buses for the students. They say that the company had gone back to promises to increase the buses to 17 and to operate buses on fixed hours. The students complain that the lack of a sufficient number of buses was responsible for their delay in arriving for classes. The students say that they boycotted the same bus company on earlier occasions hoping that a solution will be found to the problem.

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## Two churches mark Easter same day

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — The Latin and Orthodox churches on the occupied West Bank have for the first time agreed to celebrate Easter — the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ — on the same day, officials said Monday. However, in Jerusalem the Latin, a community of the Catholic Church, will still follow Rome's lead and hold their ceremonies on April 16, a week before the Orthodox. Ibrahim Qandalaft, who is in charge of Christian affairs for the Palestinian self-rule authority, explained that in the Holy City the Christian communities have to observe the status quo, which has been in force since 1975.

## Israel does not kill wounded — Rabin

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin tried to stamp out reports Monday that soldiers were not taking any prisoners with a strongly worded statement that Israel does not finish off enemy wounded. The intervention came after the army announced an investigation into allegations that an Israeli officer died from friendly fire in southern Lebanon in December (see page 7). "We send our soldiers to fight against terrorists. They have to be allowed to open fire if something moves," Mr. Rabin told reporters. "But it is unthinkable that after an engagement, when the outcome is clear, we finish off the wounded. I am not saying there have not been mistakes here and there. And if that is the case now we have to take care of it."

## Ekeus to visit Iraq on Sunday

UNITED NATIONS (AFP) — The head of the U.N.'s Special Commission on Iraqi disarmament (UNSCOM), Rolf Ekeus, will travel to Baghdad on Sunday for consultations, his spokesman said Monday. Mr. Ekeus, who will stay until Feb. 23, will seek to maintain a clear dialogue between the United Nations and Baghdad over the disarmament, spokesman Tim Trevan said. The U.N. commissioner in the last month has visited Washington, London and Paris and he will present his latest report on Iraq before the Security Council after he returns from Baghdad.

## Jahan-e-Islam 'insulted Islam'

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iranian authorities have accused a banned Islamic left-wing daily of insulting Islam and printing lies, a newspaper said Monday. Deputy Culture Minister Ezzatollah Zarghani told Resalat newspaper that Jahan-e-Islam, run by the brother of Iranian leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, had "created doubts, printed untrue stories... and insulted the religious beliefs of the Muslim nation." "The decision to ban the paper was taken in view of numerous such violations in the past," he denied the daily had been banned because it had criticized the government. Jahan-e-Islam, representing Islamic leftists who have steadily been sidelined from power since 1989, was ordered to stop publishing on Thursday after it printed several stories critical of the government.

## Romania backs Golan pullback

DAMASCUS (R) — Romania voiced support on Monday to Syria's call for full Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights and offered Romanian participation in a possible future peacekeeping force to separate Syrian and Israeli troops. Romanian Foreign Affairs Minister Teodor Viorel Melescanu also told Reuters after talks with Syrian leaders he believed the Middle East peace process was going through a crucial stage and lots of effort was needed to further the negotiations that opened in 1991.

# Israel, PLO talk peace, but remain far apart

## Washington statement reiterates Arab-Israeli commitment to accords and peace on all tracks

WASHINGTON (Agencies)

Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) have renewed their commitment to peace in Washington, vowing prompt talks on thorny issues like Palestinian elections and Israeli troop redeployments despite escalating tensions at home.

But both Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and a senior aide to PLO leader Yasser Arafat were later quoted by Israeli media as saying the meeting had failed to generate substantial progress.

Mr. Peres said his discussions with senior PLO official Nabil Shaath had been "polemical," while Arafat aide Ahmad Tibi told Israeli Radio the talks "did not bring about any progress" and accused Israel of "suffocating" the Palestinians with its closure of its border with Gaza and the West Bank.

U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, doing his best to revive the flagging Middle East negotiations, said both sides acknowledged the challenges they faced, but made it "unmistakably clear" that they were committed to a "real partnership with one another... a real peace."

Israel and Palestinian officials met on the fringes of an Arab-Israeli foreign ministers' meeting opened by President Bill Clinton Sunday, at

## Christopher, Kabariti hold talks

WASHINGTON (Petra)

American Secretary of State Warren Christopher on Monday received in Washington Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Al Kabariti, who briefed him on achievements by Jordan in the fields of democratisation, freedom, respect for human rights and the economic reform programme.

Mr. Kabariti outlined the success of Jordan's democratisation process with the participation of all political powers in creating a unique example in the Middle East.

He also dealt with economic difficulties facing Jordan as a result of its compliance with U.N. sanctions imposed on Iraq, once the Kingdom's major trading partner.

The foreign minister said despite all difficulties, Jordan chose to make peace with Israel and signed a peace treaty with it.

The minister underlined Jordan's commitment to support the Palestinians and the Palestine National Authority to enable them to regain their rights on their national soil on the basis of U.N. Security Council resolutions 242 and 338.

He also voiced Jordan's support for Syria and Lebanon in the Middle East

peace process and its backing for them in their pursuit to regain their occupied lands.

Mr. Christopher lauded Jordan's record in fields of democracy and human rights, saying the U.S. administration has officially asked Congress to write off the remainder of Jordanian debts to the U.S. immediately through an annex to the 1995 budget.

Mr. Kabariti also met with his Egyptian counterpart Amr Musa and discussed with him means of coordinating Jordanian-Egyptian stands on the peace process.

which all parties agreed to honour agreements already made and accelerate talks on all tracks.

Mr. Christopher told reporters there had been "a very significant step forward by (Israel and the PLO) to

their commitment to negotiate promptly all aspects of the interim agreement, including transfer of authority and redeployment in the rest of the West Bank, and elections..." he said in a statement.

The three-hour wider meeting produced an agreement to establish new industrial free-trade zones in the region, and President Clinton said he would clear the way

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recommit themselves to the peace process," but admitted there had been "no explicit understanding" on the border closure.

"Both sides reaffirmed

(Continued on page 7)

## JVA to take charge of designing and building dam on Yarmouk

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan and Israel on Monday agreed to have the Jordan Valley Authority (JVA) to carry out work related to designing and building a dam in the Adas-Sayeh area on the Yarmouk River, the head of the Jordanian side to the Jordanian-Israeli water committee said.

Munther Haddadin also said the Israeli government would pay its share in establishing the dam, which will be used to divert Jordan's and Israel's shares of the Yarmouk River water.

Dr. Haddadin said the committee, which met in the Israeli town of Beisan, discussed designs for the dam which the two sides agreed to build in accordance with the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty.

The committee also discussed means of storing water

on the River Jordan and adjacent valleys. It was agreed that the Jordanian government will take charge of the project and as such will have to invite representatives of the European Union (EU) to prepare tenders from consultants to conduct feasibility studies. Dr. Haddadin said.

He said a joint Jordanian-Israeli committee would cooperate with the EU through providing the relevant information on the project.

Dr. Haddadin said the EU had expressed readiness to offer Jordan a grant to conduct studies on water projects carried out as part of the peace treaty. He said the EU's desire was expressed following a European tour by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan last November.

The joint Jordanian-Israeli committee also discussed means of pumping water from the Jordan Valley to Jordanian cities for drinking purposes and pumping water from the Israeli pipelines in the north to the King Abdullah Canal in Jordan.

The Ministry of Water and Irrigation is about to offer tender documents on the project.

The committee will next meet in Tiberias in Israel to discuss costs of pumping water from the Tiberias Lake to the King Abdullah Canal. These costs will be shouldered by Jordan alone in implementation of the peace treaty.

The Jordanian negotiating team returned to Amman Monday evening after the conclusion of the seven-hour meeting.

## Rabin: Less Israelis back deal with PLO

TEL AVIV (R) — Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said that as a result of increased guerrilla violence only 35 per cent of Israelis now support the Israeli-PLO peace process, Mr. Rabin's spokesman said on Sunday.

The prime minister, meeting the visiting Russian deputy foreign minister at the weekend, told him that as a result of terrorism, public support for the peace process had declined from 70 per cent at the time of the signing of the Israeli-PLO (Palestine Liberation Organisation) accord in September, 1993, to a present level of 35 per cent.

Mr. Rabin's spokesman Oded Ben-Ami said. Opponents of the peace deal have killed scores of Israelis in suicide bombings within the Jewish state since last April, the eve of the implementation of Palestinian self-rule in Gaza and the West Bank town of Jericho.

Recent public opinion polls have shown Mr. Rabin's popularity sagging, in part because of misgivings over the peace process, but also because of a series of domestic policy blunders.

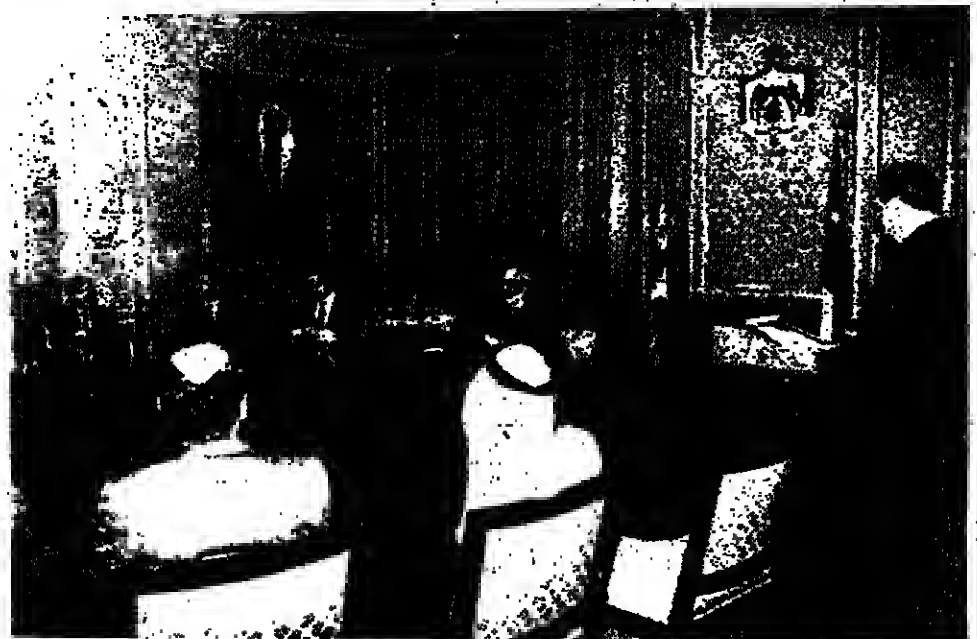
In a move that has proven popular with Israelis but has kept 60,000 Palestinians from the Jewish state, Mr. Rabin banned Arabs from entering Israel after suicide bombers killed 21 Israelis in an attack last month.

Israel has linked progress in peace talks with the Palestinians to Mr. Arafat's doing more to fight militants who attack Israelis.

Economists estimate Gaza loses \$3 million a day from the closure in remittances from the labourers and exports of local goods. It also aggravates the rate of unemployment which was set at 60 per cent before the closure.

Gaza economist Khaled Abdul Shafi said sealing off the Strip has frightened away private investors.

(Continued on page 7)



His Majesty King Hussein on Monday meets with a delegation representing retired servicemen (Petra photo)

## Ex-servicemen appeal to King for assistance

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein on Monday received the chairman and members of a committee representing the Jordanian Economic and Social Organisation of Retired Servicemen (JESORS).

The committee outlined to the King preparations for the first national conference for retired servicemen and the committee's various tasks.

King Hussein passed his directives to the committee

concerning the JESORS' activities.

The JESORS' chairman, retired Brigadier Aref Oteibe, expressed the servicemen's appreciation of the King's continued care for the interests of retired servicemen.

Brig. Oteibe referred to the economic difficulties facing retired servicemen and said they hoped that the King would help them live a decent life.

He said retired servicemen were living frugally and were appealing to the King for help.

Brig. Oteibe said that through the planned conference retired servicemen were hoping to highlight difficulties and hard economic conditions facing them.

Present at the audience were Royal Court Chief Marwan Al-Qasem and Chief Chamberlain Prince Ra'd Ben Zeid.

## Arab states aim for joint stance on nuclear treaty

CAIRO (Agencies) — Representatives of 14 Arab states will try to reach a joint position on the extension of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) during talks here Tuesday, Arab League Assistant Secretary General Adnan Omran said Monday.

Mr. Omran said the officials, meeting at the Arab League headquarters, would try to outline a draft resolution "defining a joint Arab position" on the NPT extension, to be submitted to the Arab League Council on March 22.

The officials were also to work on a draft convention on eliminating weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, which would be discussed at the council meeting here.

The states participating in Tuesday's talks would include Egypt, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Jordan, Iraq and Lebanon, Mr. Omran said.

Arab League Secretary General Esmat Abdul Meguid said in remarks published on Saturday that "some Arab countries are leaning toward signing without an Israeli commitment to

do so."

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak insisted Sunday that Egypt would only sign the NPT extension if Israel did the same.

"All I can say is the day Israel signs (the extension), I will sign," Mr. Mubarak told the Arabic-language daily Al-Hayat.

Let's wait and see what the Israelis do. If they say they are going to sign in three or four years we will put down reservations for three or four years. Then we will sign together," Mr. Mubarak said.

The United States, which provides Cairo with \$2.1 billion in aid annually, has urged Egypt not to link its position to Israel's.

Egypt and the 169 other countries that have signed the treaty are to meet in New York in April to decide whether to extend the treaty for an indefinite or limited period.

Israel, warning that it is still threatened by countries like Iran which are not involved in the Middle East peace negotiations, has refused to sign it and has never acknowledged possessing nuclear weapons.

However, Western experts say the Jewish state has about 200 nuclear warheads.

Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres declared Monday Israel would not sign the NPT.

Mr. Peres said Egypt pressed the issue on Sunday at a Washington meeting of Arab-Israeli foreign ministers.

"There was a sharp exchange and a harsh exchange but there is no change in Israel's stance," Mr. Peres told Israeli Radio in a Washington interview. "We only said that Egypt has no threat of destruction, Israel does — Iran and Iraq."

Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa, who pressed the issue, was likely to raise it again when he met U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher on Monday.

Israel and Egypt, partners to a 1979 peace treaty, are the biggest recipients of U.S. aid.

Iran may refuse to sign an indefinite extension of the NPT even if Israel joins. Iran's permanent U.N. envoy Kamal Kharazi warned Monday.

In an interview with the

(Continued on page 7)

## Chechenya truce announced

NAZRAN, Russia (Agencies) — Russia and Chechenya have reached an agreement on a ceasefire in the two-month-old war in the breakaway republic, a Defence Ministry spokesman said Monday.

Vladimir Nikanorov said the agreement was reached after five hours of talks between the commander of Russian Interior Ministry troops in Chechenya, Colonel General Anatoly Kulikov, and Aslan Maskhadov, the chief of Chechen forces.

"The parties have reached an agreement to stop fighting with heavy artillery starting tomorrow," Mr. Nikanorov said. He said Russia had also agreed to turn over the bodies of Chechens killed in the conflict.

"The first steps have been made towards achieving mutual understanding," the spokesman added.

Russia sent troops and tanks into the North Caucasus territory of Chechenya on Dec. 11 to crush a bid for independence and became bogged down in heavy fighting which killed hundreds, possibly thousands of people.

The ministry spokesman said the ceasefire agreement was reached between Russia and Chechenya in the presence of Ingush Vice-President Boris Agapov.

He added that the follow-up talks possibly to extend the ceasefire were scheduled for Wednesday and might take place in the Ingush capital of Nazran.

Moscow has repeatedly ruled out talks with rebel Chechen President Dzhokhar Dudayev, but has said it was ready to talk with field commanders. All previous attempts to set up talks and arrange a ceasefire have failed.

ITAR-TASS news agency

reporting from Nazran and quoting Ingush government sources said that Col. Kulikov, after the talks, had immediately ordered Russian forces to cease using heavy weapons.

Since Col. Kulikov is an Interior Ministry officer it was not clear if he had authority to issue direct orders to the Russian army.

TASS quoted Mr. Maskhadov as saying he was authorised by Mr. Dudayev to lead negotiations "exclusively on military issues."

It was not immediately clear whether Chechen fighters, many of whom fight on their own, would honour a ceasefire agreement. Other ceasefire agreements in December and January collapsed within hours.

The talks were held in the village of Ordzhonikidzevskaya in Ingushetia, 50

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PROTEST IN GAZA: A Palestinian boy holding two leaves of bread on Monday as he participates with his father in a demonstration to protest Israel's decision to keep the

Palestinian territories sealed off for a fourth week. Around 1,500 jobless people marched through Gaza City (See page one) (AFP photo)

## Saudis to test French tanks, unlikely to buy

DUBAI (R) — Saudi Arabia, which already has 315 U.S. main battle tanks on order, does not appear likely to buy France's Leclerc despite its agreement to test the advanced French tanks in its punishing desert this summer, experts said.

An Arab military analyst said that Riyadh, which has plans to build up its tank force to more than 1,000 in the long term, was more likely to opt for a fresh batch of American Abrams M1A2s made by General Dynamics Corp.

But despite the lessons of the 1990 tank-led Iraqi invasion of neighbouring Kuwait, the oil-producing giant's financial problems have slowed down in Saudi Arabia's ambitious arms-buying programme.

The experts were commenting on a statement earlier this month by Pierre Chiquet, chairman of Giat Industries, that he expected Riyadh to order up to 450 Leclercs in 1997 worth \$28 billion (francs \$5.33 billion).

They said two Leclerc models would be sent to the kingdom to undergo tough tests later this year in the desert heat which rises about 40 degrees Celsius (122 Fahrenheit).

"You never say no to a salesman who offers you to test-drive a new car... testing the tanks does not mean Saudi Arabia would eventually buy the tank," the Arab analyst said.

"Saudi Arabia is fully committed to the M1A2s tanks in 1990. British, French and Brazilian firms had competed for the deal."

Riyadh exercised an option to buy 150 more Abrams in 1992 for fear the General Dynamics production line could otherwise close but the deal was deferred when Kuwait ordered 256 Abrams.

The M1A2 will be the main battle tank for Saudi Arabia, one expert said.

Industry experts doubt Riyadh would embark on a major new arms shopping spree before it works its way out of its pressing financial problems.

Weak oil prices caused cash flow shortages in the kingdom, the region's largest arms buyer which traditionally paid cash or in oil for its weapons, forcing it in 1994 to slow down the delivery schedules of U.S. military hardware on order.

Shortly after the United Arab Emirates ordered 388 Leclercs and 46 support vehicles in 1993 in a deal worth some \$3.62 billion, Western industry sources said Riyadh would test the Leclerc in mid-1994 and might buy up to 200 units. But nothing further happened at the time.

A Giat official said last year the Leclerc, equipped with a German MTU 833 turbocharged diesel engine, survived grilling tests in the so-called tank graveyard, a region of rocky terrain with steep slopes near the UAE-Omani border, against challenges from the M1A2 and the British Challenger-2 made by Vickers Plc.

Experts said political considerations could also play a key role in any eventual tank order and also pointed to Riyadh's apparent displeasure with plans by French firms to help Iraq export oil once United Nations sanctions are lifted.

"This (French) rushing towards Iraq does not help," an Arab expert said.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Reporter given 74 lashes for making up news

TEHRAN (AFP) — A journalist in northeastern Iran has been sentenced to 74 lashes of the whip and suspended for three years for making up news stories to boost circulation figures, a newspaper said Monday. Kayhan said the reporter had sent a "baseless" story to the weekly Ghomesh magazine about a mother killing her six children in the town of Gharveh in Kurdistan province several months ago and had it published. The reporter later "confessed" to the authorities that his motive had been to increase the circulation and sale of his weekly, it said.

### Iraq wants assets unblocked to pay for Haj

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Iraq wants Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to unfreeze \$25 million of its assets to enable Iraqis to make a pilgrimage to Mecca, the official agency INA reported Monday. If the three Gulf Arab countries refuse Baghdad would not allow the pilgrims to go to Mecca, Saudi Arabia, in early May "as this will trigger inflation and an increase in the price of basic products," INA said. The government has decided to ask the United Nations, the Arab League and the Organisation of this Islamic Conference to persuade the three countries to meet Iraq's demand, the agency added. Finance Minister Ahmad Hussein Al Khodair told INA that Iraq's frozen assets in Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and the UAE amount to more than \$700 million, including more than \$285 million in bank accounts. Although Iraq's annual quota of pilgrims to Mecca is 18,000, only 474 Iraqis were able to go to Islam's holiest site in 1994 because of financial difficulties caused by United Nations sanctions, according to the government.

### Kuwait police bust alleged prostitution ring

KUWAIT (AP) — Police arrested 19 men and women for alleged prostitution after raiding their camp in a remote desert area, the English-language daily Arab Times reported Monday. The paper said the group included a high school girl and her mother, an Interior Ministry officer and "several military personnel." No names were disclosed. Interior Ministry spokesman Adel Al Ibrahim confirmed the arrests, but refused to give any details. Kuwaitis go camping in the desert for a couple of weeks this time of the year, taking advantage of good weather before summer sets in. The Arab Times said policemen who raided the camp also found large quantities of alcohol, which is banned in this conservative country. The newspaper did not say when the bust was made. But it said that the suspects have been released on bonds pending their appearance in court for indictment.

### Wounded baby whale dies in Turkey

ANKARA (AFP) — A baby whale wounded by two harpoon blows and stranded for four days on a beach in western Turkey has died, marine experts said Monday. Officials from the Aegean University's Marine Institution said they had lost the battle late Sunday to refloat the four-metre-long whale and take it out to sea where its mother was waiting. Professor Atilla Alpaz said the failure to save the whale calf demonstrated the need for a centre to protect and treat marine mammals found frequently in waters off Turkey. The baby whale died on a beach near the western town of Izmir and the 10-metre mother whale was still trapped in the entrance to the Gulf of Izmir. Mr. Alpaz said an autopsy was conducted on the baby whale to determine the cause of death.

### Israel ends Cairo fair boycott

CAIRO (AFP) — Israel will take part in the Cairo international fair next month for the first time since an Israeli embassy employee was shot dead at the event nine years ago, organisers said Monday. About 30 Israeli firms specialising in agriculture, technology, construction and clothing are due to take part in the fair from March 18 to 31. Israel has boycotted the event since a member of an Egyptian revolutionary group shot the embassy employee as she left the fair in 1986. Last year Israel cancelled its participation following the Feb. 25 Hebron mosque massacre. "This fair is very important for us as bilateral relations are developing between the two countries," an Israeli diplomat said. Non-oil two-way trade between Egypt and Israel has more than doubled in the first three quarters of 1994 to \$30 million from \$13 million for the same period in 1993, said Economic Minister Hoda Naguib. Most of the trade is Egyptian exports to Israel, which leapt from \$8 million in 1993 to \$21 million in 1994.

### Algerian dockers launch strike

ALGIERS (AFP) — Seven of Algeria's 10 seaports were paralysed Monday on the third day of a strike launched by dockers for equal pay. The men went on strike on Saturday after the transport ministry refused to sign an overall agreement giving dockers in all ports the same pay scale. The ministry continues to insist that pay should depend on productivity. The newspaper Al Khabar said the dockers' union had already won a 30 per cent pay rise for its members but it said the union and the government remained at loggerheads over a "redeployment plan" which the union claims would create redundancies. On Monday, about 30 ships were waiting to be unloaded in Algiers and many more were anchored at sea waiting permission to enter the harbour.

### Iranian dies at 140 years old

TEHRAN (AFP) — An Iranian man died at 140 years old, leaving 121 descendants spread over four generations, the official news agency IRNA reported on Sunday. Zolfat Soltanmoradi was in relatively good health and able to take care of himself until the last few days of his life in Obajit village in Mazandaran province north of Tehran. Villagers said Soltanmoradi had fought foreign domination in the years after World War I.

## Egyptian parliament passes law controlling union polls

CAIRO (Agencies) — The Egyptian parliament has passed a law giving government new powers over union elections amid bitter opposition from unions controlled by the fundamentalist Muslim Brotherhood.

The law, amending legislation adopted in 1993, calls for the establishment of a legal committee to supervise union elections, which could refer to state institutions for help.

Unions representing doctors, pharmacists, engineers and scientists immediately threatened a general strike, union officials said.

Before the vote the unions had mandated their leaders to set a date for a warning strike ahead of a general strike, the officials added.

The law still has to be signed by President Hosni Mubarak before taking effect.

Abdul Monem Abul Futuh said he hoped Mr. Mubarak would send the measure back to parliament, which had "carried out an anti-constitutional act."

Mr. Abul Futuh, deputy secretary-general of the Arab Doctors' Union, told AFP that "according to the constitution, any law concerning a union has to originate from the general assembly" of the union itself.

Union general assemblies earlier called for a peaceful protest march to the presidential palace Monday.

The 21 professional unions have close ties to the outlawed but previously tolerated Muslim Brotherhood, which has been subjected to an increasing clampdown by the authorities waging a battle against Muslim militants.

The 21 are mainly controlled by the Islamists, while the workers' unions are state-

controlled. The Islamists say the amendment adopted Sunday could open the way to "government interference on the pretext of having been asked to support the legal committee."

Two thousand trade unionists demonstrated in front of parliament here Saturday to protest the bill.

The authorities have accused members of the Muslim Brotherhood of funding armed Islamic militants in their campaign, which has claimed about 650 lives since it began in March 1992.

The bill, proposed by President Mubarak's National Democratic Party, now only requires Mr. Mubarak's official approval to become law. Mr. Mubarak has recently attacked the Brotherhood, saying it was giving support to the radicals who have waged the campaign aimed at ousting the secular government and installing strict Islamic rule.

The state-owned Middle East News Agency said the People's Assembly, or parliament, passed the measure in a summary session against protests from opposition legislators. Mr. Mubarak's party has more than a three-quarter majority in the 458-member assembly.

Eight opposition deputies opposed the law in a debate which lasted only one hour, MENA reported. It was unclear if other legislators voted against the measure.

Under the bill, a government-appointed committee of judges will oversee elections of all trade unions, rather than union members. The law will also give the committee the right to check unions' financial and membership records.

The unions say the law, by giving the government such sweeping powers, will undermine their independence and give it the right to rig elections. Unions estimate the law will affect up to one million of their members.

The Brotherhood, which is well-financed and highly organised, has managed to gain control of major professional organisations, such as the engineers and doctors syndicates, over the past few years.

Founded in 1928, the Brotherhood is the largest Muslim fundamentalist group in the country. Though outlawed as a political party, it has been tolerated by the government and allowed to run candidates in national elections in conjunction with other parties.

Opponents of the Brotherhood claim it has misused the union finances and used the unions as a forum to further fundamentalist goals. The Brotherhood denies these charges and claims it has renounced violence.

Late last month, the government detained 27 Brotherhood members, accusing them of funding the Muslim radicals and using the unions to carry out "terrorist plans." No charges have yet been brought.

On Saturday dozens of the union members participated in a silent sit-in outside the People's Assembly to protest the bill. Hours after Sunday's vote, union members organised another sit-in at the medical syndicate.

Legislator Fikri Al-Gazar, a close ally of the Brotherhood, described the law as unconstitutional and warned that it would create tension in Egyptian society.

## 100,000 illegal aliens gone from Saudi Arabia

RIYADH (Agencies) — Some 100,000 foreigners have left Saudi Arabia amid a security crackdown on illegal aliens, most of them Asians and Africans seeking work in the oil-rich kingdom.

In a statement Sunday, Interior Minister Prince Nayef Ibn Abdul Aziz also said that King Fahd has pardoned 4,800 prisoners on the occasion of Ramadan.

He gave no details of those covered by the amnesty. But the monarch normally pardons prisoners who have committed minor offences and served part of their sentences on religious occasions.

Last November, the Interior Ministry said foreigners without legal residence or work permits could voluntarily leave the kingdom without being penalised. It gave no deadline for the offer.

A number of embassies cooperated in arranging for the departure of illegal aliens.

"We hope all citizens and residents will cooperate with us on this matter, and I hope we will not be forced to take more deterrent measures which will become a necessity at a later point," said Prince Nayef, according to the official Saudi Press agency.

He gave no estimate for illegal residents who may still be in the kingdom.

The problem with illegal aliens stems mainly from the millions of people who converge on the kingdom every year for pilgrimage to Islam's holiest shrines. Some stay on to look for work.

Saudi Arabia has almost five million foreigners out of total population of 18 million.

Around a million people flocked to Mecca last year for the annual pilgrimage or Haj.

Saudi Arabia expelled several thousand Egyptians and Asians last year who had been working here illegally.

Saudi newspapers had in December quoted businessmen as saying the deportations would create job opportunities for Saudis at a time when the government is trying to encourage a bigger role for its citizens in the labour force.

## Algerian theatre director shot dead

ALGIERS (Agencies) — Two gunmen assassinated the director of the Algerian National Theatre (TNA), Azeddine Medjoubi, in central Algiers on Monday, security officials said.

Witnesses said Medjoubi was shot by the gunmen who were lying in wait for him outside the theatre building, the former Algiers Opera, in the centre of the capital.

The Ministry of Culture stated that he was hit by several bullets in the chest and died on the spot, but no other official comment on the attack was forthcoming.

Medjoubi, a well-known and much-loved actor, was the second theatrical personality to be murdered after the manager of the regional theatre in the western city of Oran, Abdul Kader Alloua, was killed in March 1994.

Medjoubi was renowned for his play "Hafila Tassir," adopted from Tennessee Williams' drama "A Streetcar Named Desire" and shown several times on Algerian television.

Hundreds of Algerian artists, intellectuals, teachers, government employees and doctors, as well as foreign expatriate workers, have been slain in a campaign blamed on extremists at war with the military-backed regime.

The violence began after the army intervened in January 1992 to cancel the second round of general elections the now outlawed Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) was poised to win.

The fighting and the campaign of assassinations is estimated to have claimed at least 30,000 lives.

Armed fundamentalists have threatened to step up their activities during the Holy Month of Ramadan claiming that it was a time to intensify the struggle.

French Prime Minister Edouard Balladur, in a clear rebuke to President Francois Mitterrand, said on Monday that outside interference in Algeria's civil strife was bound to be counter-productive.

Without mentioning the president by name, the conservative premier condemned indirectly the Socialist president's proposal 10 days ago for a European Union-sponsored peace conference, which drew a furious rejection from Algeria's military rulers.

Mr. Balladur, front-runner in France's presidential election, told a news conference on his manifesto that high-profile foreign intervention would not help the Algerians solve their problems through a necessary dialogue.

"We must take good care not to appear to interfere in an artificial and unwanted way in a debate where the protagonists would not fail to unite immediately against those who intervened or proffered unwanted advice," he said.

The conservative government dissociated itself last week from Mr. Mitterrand's proposal, making clear it was a personal idea rather than a French policy initiative.

The Algerians recalled the ambassador in protest against Mr. Mitterrand's suggestion and had their state media denounce him.

### JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 73111-14

PROGRAMME TWO  
17:00 ..... Cocottes Minutes  
17:30 ..... One L2 Michler Gagne  
18:00 ..... Pagine  
19:00 ..... News in French  
19:30 ..... Best Stories  
19:50 ..... Home Improvement  
20:30 ..... Road to Avonlea  
21:10 ..... Egnora  
22:00 ..... News in English  
22:30 ..... Watgate  
23:00 ..... The Room Upstairs

### PRAYER TIMES

04:58 ..... Fajr  
06:16 ..... (Sunrise) Dhuhr  
11:59 ..... Dhuhr  
12:56 ..... Asr  
17:34 ..... Maghrib  
18:42 ..... Isha

### CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church  
Swedish, Tel. 811741  
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 827755  
St. Joseph Church Tel. 824590  
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 827420  
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757

### Terrace Church Tel: 622366

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541

Anglican Church Tel. 630551, Tel. 628543  
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331  
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261  
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751  
Armenian International Church Tel. 625226  
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328  
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 64105  
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Tel. 654972  
Church of Nazareth Tel. 677691  
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

### WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

Temperatures will drop gradually with a chance of scattered showers and winds northwesterly moderate. In Amman, skies will be partly cloudy to cloudy, winds northerly and very calm.  
Min/Max, temp.  
Amman ..... 4/15  
Aqaba ..... 10/23

### JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Deserts ..... 2/17  
Jordan Valley ..... 4/22

Yesterday's high temperature:  
Amman 18, Aqaba 25. Humidity:  
reading, Amman 24 per cent,  
Aqaba 35 per cent.

### USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

#### NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:  
Dr. Ghaleb Zawaideh ..... 730111  
Dr. Abdul Hadi Tayim ..... 620115  
Dr. Khaldoun Asfour ..... 694441  
Dr. Adnan Zughloul ..... 881941  
Fina pharmacy ..... 661912  
Firdous pharmacy ..... 735356  
Al Asma pharmacy ..... 637165  
Nairook pharmacy ..... 626762  
Al Salam pharmacy ..... 636731  
Yacoub pharmacy ..... 649445  
Shmehani pharmacy ..... 637604  
Nairook pharmacy ..... 626762  
Najib pharmacy ..... 847632

### EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre ..... 637111  
Civil Defence Department ..... 661111  
Civil Defence Emergency ..... 630341  
Rescue Police 192 ..... 621111, 637777  
Fire Brigade ..... 617101  
Blood Bank ..... 73121  
Highway Police ..... 843402  
Traffic Police ..... 896390  
Public Security Department ..... 636321  
Hotel Complaints ..... 645845  
Price Complaints ..... 661176  
Water and Sewerage ..... 897467  
Complaints ..... 787111  
Ambulance Municipality ..... 121  
Overseas Calls ..... 111254  
Central Amman Telephone ..... 623101  
Repairs ..... 623101  
Aqaba Telephone Repairs ..... 661101  
Jordan Telephones ..... 731111  
Radio Jordan ..... 734111  
Water Authority ..... 640101  
Jordan Electricity Authority ..... 815615

### HOSPITALS

AMMAN:  
Hajjoun Medical Centre 81813/32  
ZARQA:  
Al-Khalid Maternity, J. Amn. 64241/6  
Al-Khalid Maternity, J. Amn. 64241/2  
Jabal Amman Maternity ..... 642463  
Malhas, J. Amman ..... 634140  
Palestine, Shmehani ..... 664174  
Shmehani Hospital ..... 669131  
University Hospital ..... 645845  
Al-Mushtaq Hospital ..... 662279  
The Islamic, Abdali ..... 666127/37  
Al-Abul, Abdali ..... 664164/6  
Reim, Al-Mushtaq ..... 777101/3  
Al-Badr, J. Asfarah ..... 731112/6  
Army, Matka ..... 891611/15  
Queen Aika Hospital ..... 686100  
Amal Hospital ..... 647155  
ZARQA:  
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)893323  
Zarqa National Hospital ..... (09)905660  
The Sina Hospital ..... (09)906732  
Al-Haram Modern Hospital (09)999790  
IBRAHIM:  
Princess Basma Hospital ..... (02)73555

### FOR THE TRAVELLER

#### QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) Information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (06)52300-5, where it should always be verified.

#### ARRIVALS

##### Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

84:50 Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur (RJ)  
87:30 ..... Damascus (RJ)  
89:15 ..... Agaba (RJ)  
89:55 ..... Abu Dhabi (RJ)  
89:55 ..... Muscat, Dubai (RJ)  
18:15 ..... Doha, Bahrain (RJ)  
16:50 ..... Chicago, Amsterdam (RJ)  
18:30 ..... London, Frankfurt (RJ)

### Other Flights (Terminal 2)

04:20 ..... Vienna (OS)  
14:25 ..... Amsterdam, New York (KJ)  
28:00 ..... Aden (DY)  
28:20 ..... Beirut (ME)  
23:20 ..... Amsterdam (KL)  
23:50 ..... Bucharest (RO)

#### DEPARTURES

##### Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

07:00 ..... Agaba (RJ)  
08:15 ..... Amsterdam, New York (KJ)  
11:30 ..... Montreal, Toronto (RJ)  
11:35 ..... Geneva, Madrid (RJ)  
11:55 ..... Paris, Brussels (RJ)  
12:00 ..... London (RJ)  
12:30 ..... Vienna, Frankfurt (RJ)  
12:45 ..... Cairo (RJ)  
20:05 ..... Larissa (RJ)  
20:30 ..... Jeddah (RJ)  
21:25 ..... Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)  
22:10 ..... Kuala Lumpur, Singapore (RJ)  
23:59 ..... Jeddah (RJ)

#### Other Flights (Terminal 2)

05:45 ..... Damascus, Paris (AF)  
08:15 ..... Larnaca, Rome (AZ)  
13:50 ..... Vienna (OS)  
15:25 ..... Damascus (AZ)  
21:50 ..... Aden (DY)  
06:20 ..... Amsterdam (KL)  
06:50 ..... Bucharest (RO)

### HIJAZ RAILWAY TRAIN

Dep. Amman 8:00 every Monday

Arr. Damascus 5:00 p.m. every Monday

Dep. Damascus 7:30 a.m. every Sunday

Arr. Amman 5:00 p.m. every Sunday

#### MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.

Apple ..... 700/400  
Banana ..... 680  
Banana (Mukammal) ..... 680  
Cabbage ..... 140/80  
Carrot ..... 200/120  
Cauliflower ..... 100/60  
Cucumbers (large) ..... 200/120  
Cucumbers (small) ..... 360/200  
Eggplant ..... 650/400  
Garlic ..... 280/170  
Grape Fruit ..... 270/170  
Lemon ..... 340/200  
Marrow (large) ..... 160/100  
Marrow (small) ..... 300/200  
Onion (green) ..... 340/220  
Onion (dry) ..... 320/220  
Orange ..... 500/300  
Pepper (hot) ..... 100/800  
Pepper (sweet) ..... 480/320  
Potato ..... 320/220  
Radish ..... 180/100  
Spinach ..... 100/60  
String Beans ..... 500/300  
Tomato ..... 300/180  
Turnip ..... 180/120





**BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION:** Monday Feb. 13 marked the birthday of Her Royal Highness Princess Alia Bint Al Hussein. Born in Amman, the Princess finished her school in the capital and later in London. She joined the University of Jordan, the English department, from where she graduated in 1972, first among the graduates. Princess Alia is president of the pan-Arab society for Arabian horses and is honorary chairperson of a number of Jordanian clubs and voluntary and charitable societies. Princess Alia is continually involved in efforts to boost women's rights and promote the status of services for Jordanian children.

## 'Legal changes conducive to economic expansion'

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Tourism and textiles are two major sectors that hold out promises of immediate dividends for Jordan in its efforts to develop its economy and the government needs to remove all restrictions that impede the potential growth of the two sectors, a European economic expert said Monday.

Now that the Middle East region is on the threshold of peace, Jordan and other countries in the area stand to benefit from a European Union (EU) initiative to make a "free trade area" between Cape North and Salihara and the Gibraltor and the Middle East, said Guy van Haeverbeke, a veteran who has served the European Community for more than 30 years.

"There will be Euro-Med flow (of trade and economic cooperation) and there will be a Med-Med flow," he said, adding that such a free trade area offered unlimited opportunities to all sides in an atmosphere of quality-based competition. Speaking to the Jordan Times on the fringes of a seminar — "Jordan and the World" — organised by Economic Perspective, a Jordanian newsletter, Dr. Haeverbeke said he was impressed by the tourism potential in Jordan.

"For millions of people the (Middle East) area is one whole tourist spot rich with attractions," he said, echoing the theme that joint tourism projects for the countries of the region under specific agreements of free travel among them were the best approach to taking advantage of the potential in the sector.

Acknowledging that there was a noticeable increase in the flow of tourism to Jordan in the wake

of the success of the peace process, Mr. Haeverbeke said, however, that the level was "nowhere near the full potential."

In textiles, Dr. Haeverbeke said he did not agree with the argument that Jordan did not have the raw material or the technology to successfully meet the demands of the European market. He said he found quite a good number of people in Jordan who are capable of using to the challenges of the international market and make a success of local production and exports.

He noted that Jordan and the European Union were on the verge of entering a new trade agreement under which EU member countries would offer preferential treatment to Jordanian goods. The accord, he said, is an area where Jordan could secure favourable terms for its potential textile exports.

The accession of EU member states to the World Trade Organisation (WTO), which in essence means barrier-free trade and removal of unfair protective measures, does not contradict the notion of favourable EU treatment for Jordanian products, he said, referring to the possibilities of special arrangements that WTO allows.

In general, he said, the government needs to "create the right legal environment... to gain from the economics of the underlying fabric of peace" and move towards improving local quality control and standards and specifications.

These changes should come in the form of legislation that encourages healthy competition on the basis of quality of products and services and prevents unhealthy practices as protective barriers and dumping. "This is a job for the legislature," he said.



**KING RECEIVES CDD DIRECTOR:** His Department. Lt. Gen. Ghoul presented Majesty King Hussein received at the King with a set of equipment used by Royal Court Monday Lieutenant General civil defence men in carrying out their Afif Ghoul, director of the Civil Defence tasks, giving details about their use.



**Her Majesty Queen Noor Monday takes part in the tree-planting ceremony organised by the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (Photo by George Crystal)**

## Queen plants trees in Yajouz forest

AMMAN — Her Majesty Queen Noor and His Royal Highness Prince Hamzah joined the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN) members, nature conservation groups from private and government schools, family and friends on Monday for the annual tree-planting ceremony at the Noor Al-Husseini forest in Yajouz.

The Queen, the patron of the RSCN, and Prince Hamzah planted the first eight of the 1,500 to 2,000 cedar and acacia trees to be planted this year in the 400-dunam forest given to the RSCN by the Ministry of Agriculture.

Queen Noor was welcomed by 2,800 school children from 94 nature conservation clubs established by the RSCN. The RSCN has founded 370 nature conservation clubs at government and private schools throughout the Kingdom.

Queen Noor expressed to the school children her pride in their environmental efforts and helped them in planting the trees; she reminded them not to leave the plastic wrapping behind so as not to harm the trees' growth. She commended the RSCN on their efforts to mobilise so many young people to participate in programmes promoting environmental awareness and emphasised the importance of individual responsibility for greening Jordan.

Queen Noor was received by Anis Muasher, President of the RSCN, Issa Shaheen, managing director of the RSCN and members of the RSCN.

In a statement at the ceremony, Mr. Muasher said that the six forests planted by RSCN are: King Hussein, Queen Noor, Abdul Hamid Sharaf, Al Muqabeleen, Al Zab and Al Ballan, located around the capital.

Mr. Muasher called on all citizens to take responsibility in greening the country through planting as many trees as possible.

He said that with lapse of time the forest will be a natural habitat of flora and fauna of all kinds, thus helping restore a natural balance in the country.

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## Traders discuss trend in economy

AMMAN (Petra) — The Jordan Trade Association (JTA) has helped Jordan enter non-traditional markets in Europe in 1988 and its endeavours towards marketing Jordanian goods abroad are continuing unabated, according to Kamal Qaqish, JTA president.

Addressing the opening session of a two-day meeting entitled "Jordan and the World," Mr. Qaqish said that the way to boosting Jordan's exports lies in organising trade fairs abroad and seminars to orient the public and the local merchants on information about world markets and their requirements.

Expressing belief that Jordan's economy was heading in the right direction, Mr. Qaqish said that in the coming years economic growth was expected, thanks to the

efforts of the Jordanian leadership.

He said that the meeting, in which local and non-Jordanian economists are taking part, aims at discussing various aspects of the Jordanian economy, focusing on incentives given to investors and calling on foreign and local investors to launch joint investment projects especially in the peace era.

Also addressing the opening session was Riad Khouri, representing the local company Meba which organised the meeting in cooperation with the JTA. He said that the seminar aimed at focusing attention on Jordan's relations with the outside world in the financial and economic arenas.

Several speakers addressed the audience at the session, discussing Jordan's economic

links with Europe and emphasising the need for bolstering such relationship. They also outlined the privileges offered to investors under a law for promoting investments.

Mr. Khouri also spoke about trade competitions among countries and their benefits for the consumers, stressing the need for producers to continually seek new markets for Jordanian products.

Participants at the meeting are discussing a range of topics related to Jordanian exports, foreign investments in Jordan, the transfer of modern technology to the Kingdom and the environment. Special attention is being focused on Jordan's economic ties with European countries.

## Prince Hassan calls for consumer awareness campaign

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan speaking at a meeting in his office Monday with the president and members of the Protection of the Consumers Society from Amman and Irbid, called on the media to promote programmes for spreading awareness among the members of the public of their rights and duties.

Crown Prince Hassan said that awareness could be spread from the mosque pulpit (minbar) through sermons aimed at enlightening the consumers on their responsibilities, on the need to ensure the good quality of the goods they buy and on the merchants' monopoly over certain consumer goods and their abidance by the required specifications.

Prince Hassan's meeting with the society members was

attended by his advisor, Mohammad Saqqaf.

Society President Mohammad Obeidat voiced the society's appreciation of the Prince's concern with the interest of the Jordanian consumers and his pledge to support the society's activities and endeavours.

Following the meeting, Dr. Obeidat said that the society will soon coordinate matters with the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs for the sake of guiding the public, through the mosques, on matters concerning consumption prices of commodities and related issues.

He said that the society, which started its services in 1989, was the brainchild of Prince Hassan who continually provides the society board with guidance and advice. The meeting with Prince

Hassan came one day after deputies in Parliament questioned the fitness of imported meat for human consumption.

Deputy Nazih Ammarin, from Karak, had said during Sunday's session that some reports suggested that merchants were importing meat unfit for human consumption during and before the start of the holy month of Ramadan.

Health Minister Arcif Batayneh replied by stressing that the Health Ministry does not allow the entry into the country of food before laboratory tests determine that it is fit for consumption. When proved to be unfit, such meat or other foodstuffs are not allowed to be marketed but are destroyed while the merchants involved in the transaction are put on trial, said the minister.

## TCC privatisation enters new phase

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The restructuring of Jordan's telecommunications sector entered a new phase on Monday with the launching of a three-day meeting which will discuss a plan drawn up by an international consultant on commercialising the state-owned Telecommunications Corporation (TCC) ahead of privatisation.

The government announced last year that privatising the TCC was a strategic objective and the process would be launched with transforming the status of the monopoly as a full-fledged commercial entity in the first phase.

It is expected that the actual process of commercialisation of the corporation would begin around mid-1995, after the draft law is formalised through the government and Parliament, while the TCC would carry out the relevant administrative and financial changes within itself to meet with the requirements of a commercial entity.

The commercialisation and privatisation of the TCC comes in line with the government's gradual moves towards a free market economy with limited or no direct state involvement in the sectors such as telecommunications, transport etc.

The private sector has been allowed to enter the telecommunications area after amendments were made to the relevant law, allowing commercial firms to have concessions in "complementary services." Subsequently, private operators secured a concession for radio paging under an accord signed in 1992, and for cellular phones under a deal entered last year.

Several international experts who visited Jordan since 1990 have strongly recommended the privatisation of the TCC and streamlining foreign and local private sector involve-

ment in telecommunications under the close watch of a regulatory body.

The experts, some of whom met with senior government leaders, also pointed out that the long-term gains of the government in privatising telecommunications under controlled conditions would be much more beneficial than the short-term deprivation of revenues from the state-owned TCC. The advantages include timely catching up with advanced technology in the field.

It is estimated that the TCC generated more than JD 120 million in revenues to the treasury in 1994; not an insignificant amount, given that the state budget was JD 1.35 billion.

However, because it was forced to freeze all modernisation and expansion projects for more than four years since 1989, as a result of the economic crisis Jordan faced, the TCC has not been able to meet the growing demand for telephone services in the country.

Under the present form of the relevant law, the TCC retains the monopoly for offering basic services — telephone lines. Announcing the plan to change the status of the law, the government said last year that the corporation would remain to be "one of the operators" in the sector rather than "the sole operator."

It was announced at the outset of Monday's meeting that the concerned authorities have already prepared a draft law on the status of the TCC and the draft would be sent to the constitutional process of its enactment.

The meeting, attended by a steering committee chaired by Minister of Posts and Telecommunications Jamal Sarayreh and senior TCC officials directly concerned with the process of commercialisation, is expected to come up with recommendations on the

transformation plan prepared by Britain's Price Waterhouse, an international consultancy firm.

The details of the plan were not immediately available, but the first steps in commercialising the TCC, a state monopoly, are expected to involve changes in the laws that created the corporation and gave it its mandate of meeting Jordan's telecommunications needs.

Addressing the meeting, Mr. Sarayreh noted that Jordanians wanted "to make telecommunications available for all people living in Jordan, whether they are in rural or urban areas, and (that) service should be obtained at fair prices that reflect cost, efficiency and... profit."

In line with this approach, the government's main objective is to "stimulate and support the economic, social and cultural development of Jordan and to improve income generation, whether directly as the owner of the presently dominant operator (TCC), or indirectly from the stronger and more competitive business of the private sector," said the minister.

The "sectoral restructuring" of telecommunications, as officials describe the process, involves setting up policy department and functions, establishing an independent regulatory body, changing the administrative and financial procedures currently in effect at the TCC, and enactment of the required legal amendments.

Walid Dweik, director-general of the TCC, is the overall head of the "TCC transformation project." Others involved in the project include M. Khasawneh as director-general of the regulatory body, H. Al Jalaby, as head of the sector policy team, M. Hijazi, a financial advisor to the minister of finance, as manager of the privatisation project. Nabulsi and Company is handling the legal aspects of the project.

## WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

### PLAY

- ★ Play (in Arabic) entitled "Ye Who Are Hearing" at the Royal Cultural Centre at 9:00 p.m.
- ★ Play (in Arabic) entitled "An Office to Solve the Problems" at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.

### NEWS

- ★ ABC News Highlights and McNeil-Lehrer News Hour at the American Center at 2:30 p.m.

### EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Photo exhibition at the Friends of Archaeology Center.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings under glass entitled "Oriental Roots" by Fatima Rahou at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ "Young America" exhibit (with photographs featuring Americans of all ages) at the American Center.
- ★ Exhibition of works by Qasim Al Samir at the Housing Bank Complex Gallery.
- ★ Book exhibition at the Royal Cultural Centre. Also showing another exhibition of Arabic Calligraphy.
- ★ Exhibition of the works of Lebanese artist Amin Al Basha at Darat Al Funun. Also showing works by contemporary Arab artists.
- ★ Educational works depicting the life of "Voltaire" at the French Cultural Centre.

## HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

### Irshaidat receives EU delegation

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Water and Irrigation Saleh Irshaidat met in his office Monday with a delegation from the European Union (EU). Discussion covered the prospect of EU providing assistance to the Kingdom, to enable it to carry out water projects as provided for under the Jordan-Israeli peace treaty. These include the building of dams and the diversion canals in the Jordan Valley region. The EU delegation has promised to finance the feasibility studies and the preparation of plans for these projects. The ministry said that consultancy and feasibility studies will be completed by mid-June.

### House meets Wednesday

AMMAN (Petra) — The Lower House of Parliament is due to meet Wednesday, in the presence of the Cabinet members, to allow government ministers to reply to queries by deputies on various issues. The House will also debate a report by its Finance Committee which contains two reports submitted by the Audit Bureau.

### Jordanian-Palestinian committee convenes

AMMAN (Petra) — The Jordanian-Palestinian committee entrusted with promoting trade between the two countries will hold a meeting at the Ministry of Industry and Trade Tuesday. The meeting, which is in implementation of the Jordanian-Palestinian agreement signed on Jan. 26, is expected to come up with a list of commodities which will be exchanged by the two sides and other fees exempt from customs duty.

### 133 merchants fined Sunday

AMMAN (Petra) — Ministry of Supply inspection teams Sunday issued fines to 133 merchants in Jordan for violating ministry regulations. A Supply Ministry statement said that 70 of these merchants were in the Amman area. The teams had fined 169 merchants the previous day. The fining of merchants followed a pledge by the minister of supply that the ministry will take drastic actions against violating merchants especially during Ramadan when prices tend to increase unjustifiably.

**Lebanese Day**

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JORDAN**

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## Peru masses troops for 'final assault' on Ecuadorean post

LIMA (R) — Peru has bolstered troop strength along its northern border in advance of a "final assault" on a key Ecuadorean outpost in a disputed patch of Amazon jungle, according to local press reports Sunday.

Heavy rains and rugged terrain had prevented the Peruvian army from launching the attack on Tiwinza post immediately following saturation bombing late last week, the reports said.

The army in the last 24 hours has transported some 2,000 soldiers to the Peru-Ecuador line, most from highland Ayacucho Department, the reports added.

Official comment was not immediately available.

The latest Ecuador-Peru dispute is over an unmarked 48-mile (76-km) stretch of border in the remote Cordillera Del Condor that was set out in a 1942 Rio de Janeiro Protocol bringing and end to their 1941 border conflict.

President Alberto Fujimori said Saturday that Peruvian troops had seized the hills above Tiwinza, which Peru says is the last Ecuadorian stronghold on Peruvian soil, and that a final attack was imminent.

But he declined to predict when fighting would be over. "We are in a delicate situation because there is an escalation," he said. "I cannot make predictions."

As fighting stretched into its 18th day Sunday, Peru mapped out plans to launch a diplomatic counter-offensive Monday, sending diplomats, jurists, academics and jour-

nalists abroad to explain Lima's position in the conflict.

Government sources said Peru plans to send out the missions simultaneously to Europe, Latin America and the United States to counter what they say has been Ecuador's "disinformation campaign" regarding the border dispute.

Former U.N. secretary general and presidential candidate Javier Perez de Cuellar said in an interview Sunday the mission should go beyond simply explaining Peru's position.

They should "ask that the countries help take this, once and for all, to the negotiating table to finish the demarcation (of the border) as a permanent and definitive solution to the problem," he said.

Mr. Perez de Cuellar said he was worried Ecuador would again reject a peace proposal from the four guarantors of the 1942 Rio de Janeiro Protocol in an effort to have the overall border issue mediated by the U.N. or the Organisation of American States.

Peru has insisted that a panel comprised of officials from the guarantor nations—Argentina, Brazil, Chile and the United States—is the only international body with jurisdiction in the matter.

Ecuador's armed forces said Sunday that Peruvian anti-aircraft fire hit one of its warplanes, but the aircraft returned safely to base.

The statement was made through a communique handed out after a Peruvian television station reported that Peru had shot down two Ecuadorean planes. The communique did not deny the version directly.

"The Ecuadorean Air Force provided air support to the Ecuadorean patrols operating in Cueva de Los Tayos Base," the statement said.

"As a result of this support, one of our planes was hit by enemy anti-aircraft fire and had to return to base, without much consequence," it added.

In Lima, a television station said Peru's armed forces shot down two planes to the disputed area, where the armies from both countries have clashed for the last 18 days.

America Television said that the Israeli-made Ecuadorean planes crashed under intense anti-aircraft fire.

Peruvian military sources did not immediately comment on the version, but a high ranking Ecuadorean military officer said that the joint command had no information of missing Ecuadorean planes.

"Some of our planes left their bases today on support mission, but all of them returned to their bases," the officer told Reuters.

The officer said he did not know if any Ecuadorean planes left their bases Sunday evening, but he said it was unlikely.

The communique that Ecuadorean and Peruvian troops clashed Sunday at the

disputed border but said the skirmishes were less intense than in previous days.

So far, Ecuador admits that nine of its soldiers have died and 37 been wounded since hostilities started over the disputed border.

In Brasilia, diplomats scrambled Sunday to keep talks alive between Ecuador and Peru over their border battle, but Ecuadorian officials were talking tough after their troops downed at least two Peruvian warplanes.

Mr. Fujimori said Saturday that Ecuador's army had shot down two Sukhoi bombers as well as an A37 ground attack aircraft. He said a Peruvian chopper was also missing.

Mr. Fujimori said the jets were hit around Ecuador's disputed Tiwinza border post, a focal point of the countries' fight over an undermarked 78-kilometre (48-mile) stretch of frontier in the Andes' Condor range.

Diplomats from the guarantor countries met in Brazil's capital to try to advance work on a ceasefire agreement.

Ecuador's Foreign Ministry released a statement Sunday marking the anniversary of explorer Francisco de Orellana's discovery of the western reaches of the Amazon after setting out from Quito.

"Today more than ever," the statement said, "Ecuadorans have united... to defend the historical legacy of Orellana's feat Feb. 12, 1542: the beginning of Ecuador's destiny and rights in the Amazon Basin."

U.K.'s Duke of Kent lays wreath for Dresden dead

DRESDEN, Germany (R) — Britain's Duke of Kent joined senior German and British diplomats and army commanders Monday to lay wreaths in memory of the 35,000 civilians killed in the carpet bombing of central Dresden 50 years ago.

The presence of the duke, cousin of Britain's Queen Elizabeth, symbolised the post-war reconciliation between the two countries which has been the theme of the 50th anniversary commemorations. German newspapers and commentators said.

Top military commanders from Britain, the United States and Germany also attended the wreath-laying at the Heidefriedhof Cemetery, where many of the victims lie.

Britain has never apologised for an attack which ranks among the most brutal of World War II.

U.S. bombers also joined the raid on Feb. 13, 1945 which turned the famed baroque centre of Dresden into a roaring furnace, but left almost unscathed areas of potential military significance such as army barracks and railway junctions.

The Duke of Kent was due later Monday to hand over plans for a gold cross which British donors, including the queen and the government, will provide to adorn the cupola of the bombed-out Church of Our Lady when it is rebuilt.

The church was once Dresden's most cherished landmark and its ruins were preserved after the raid as a memorial.

Simon Barrington-Ward, bishop of the British city of Coventry which was bombed by Nazi Germany's Luftwaffe in World War II, said the donation was a "signal of new life and peace."

"On the 50th anniversary of the destruction of Dresden, I will express our regret and our hope of securing peace together," he wrote in Berlin's Tagespiegel newspaper.

Queen Elizabeth was booted on a visit to Dresden in 1992, shortly after the queen mother unveiled a statue in London of the man who masterminded the raid, Air Chief Marshal Sir Arthur "Bomber" Harris.

The German media have given detailed front-page coverage to the anniversary.

Murder-scene tour gives Simpson jurors new perspective

LOS ANGELES (R) — O.J. Simpson was back behind bars and life was returning to normal in his upscale neighbourhood Monday, but jurors to the American football legend's trial were left to ponder what they had seen on a weekend tour of the murder scene.

After three weeks of opening statements and oftentimes riveting testimony, jurors Sunday finally had a chance to get a first-hand look at the now-infamous sites linked to the brutal slayings of his ex-wife Nicole Brown Simpson and her friend Ron Goldman.

Travelling in a heavily-guarded motorcade, the courtroom-on-wheels visited the luxury Brentwood townhouse where the victims were stabbed to death and Simpson's mansion where investigators found a trail of bloody evidence.

When it was over, both sides were eager to find in the jurors' dispassionate faces any sign that they had been swayed in their favour.

Jurors looked on Sunday at Simpson — back home for the first time in eight months — stood on his front lawn near the children's play area where his attorneys say he was practicing his golf swing around the time of the murders last June 12.

And jurors watched as Simpson's mood shifted from one of chatting amiably with his attorneys to waiting in sombre silence until the tour was over, according to pool reporters at the scene.

disputed border but said the skirmishes were less intense than in previous days.

So far, Ecuador admits that nine of its soldiers have died and 37 been wounded since hostilities started over the disputed border.

In Brasilia, diplomats scrambled Sunday to keep talks alive between Ecuador and Peru over their border battle, but Ecuadorian officials were talking tough after their troops downed at least two Peruvian warplanes.

Mr. Fujimori said Saturday that Ecuador's army had shot down two Sukhoi bombers as well as an A37 ground attack aircraft. He said a Peruvian chopper was also missing.

Mr. Fujimori said the jets were hit around Ecuador's disputed Tiwinza border post, a focal point of the countries' fight over an undermarked 78-kilometre (48-mile) stretch of frontier in the Andes' Condor range.

Diplomats from the guarantor countries met in Brazil's capital to try to advance work on a ceasefire agreement.

Ecuador's Foreign Ministry released a statement Sunday marking the anniversary of explorer Francisco de Orellana's discovery of the western reaches of the Amazon after setting out from Quito.

"Today more than ever," the statement said, "Ecuadorans have united... to defend the historical legacy of Orellana's feat Feb. 12, 1542: the beginning of Ecuador's destiny and rights in the Amazon Basin."

U.K.'s Duke of Kent lays wreath for Dresden dead

DRESDEN, Germany (R) — Britain's Duke of Kent joined senior German and British diplomats and army commanders Monday to lay wreaths in memory of the 35,000 civilians killed in the carpet bombing of central Dresden 50 years ago.

The presence of the duke, cousin of Britain's Queen Elizabeth, symbolised the post-war reconciliation between the two countries which has been the theme of the 50th anniversary commemorations. German newspapers and commentators said.

Top military commanders from Britain, the United States and Germany also attended the wreath-laying at the Heidefriedhof Cemetery, where many of the victims lie.

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Supporters of the Northern League party attend the party congress closing day with the party symbol, a red cross on white background painted on their cheeks. Italy's federalist Northern League, in disarray since it brought

## Italy's Northern League looks left after congress split

MILAN, Italy (AFP) — Italy's federalist Northern League, in disarray since it brought down media tycoon Silvio Berlusconi's government in December, agreed at a congress which ended here Sunday it would have to ally with the left in the case of new elections.

Despite repeated assertions by its leader Umberto Bossi that "the League will not turn left, it is in the centre" in an attempt to keep on board small businessmen, the movement implicitly realised it will have to team up electorally with the ex-communist Democratic Party of the Left (PDS).

Given that realisation, numerous supporters have already jumped ship in protest at the way the party pulled the rug from under Mr. Berlusconi just before Christmas.

But Mr. Bossi was adamant that his movement "must build a pole at the centre, representing the middle classes" while remaining "distinct from the pole of the right and the social democratic pole."

He said he also hoped that liberal elements in Mr. Berlusconi's Forza Italia movement would join him.

But that appeared an impossible dream Sunday given the enduring strength of the link between the media magnate's supporters and the former neo-fascist National Alliance of Gianfranco Fini.

Mr. Bossi has also lost his

low political traveller of the past 15 years with the resignation Saturday of League co-founder and deputy leader Roberto Maroni. The split between the two was sealed by Mr. Maroni and his supporters urging a move inside the orbit of the "pole of liberty and solidarity" which Mr. Berlusconi wants to build based on support from League dissidents and rightist elements of the Popular Party, the former Christian Democrats, alongside Forza Italia.

By quitting the League, which Sunday changed its name, adding the words Federal Italy to appeal to voters outside its northern strongholds, Mr. Maroni managed to prise away from the party half a dozen deputies who now look set to join 50 other dissidents among the 177 MPs the party had elected last March.

The pro-Berlusconi caucus of former League members meanwhile held their own congress Sunday in Genoa under the banner of the newly-formed Italian Federalist League (LIF).

Despite asserting his centrist credentials, Mr. Bossi had already intimated Saturday that he could accept an "electoral alliance" and share "programmes" with the PDS — even if the link would not be "organic" in nature — with regional polls and possibly early legislative elections on the horizon.

The League congress

attended by some 4,000 supporters and 400 delegates overwhelmingly backed the apparent lurch towards the left and rapturously applauded PDS leader Massimo D'Alema, previously caricatured as an ogre of the left.

Mr. D'Alema told the congress he believed a general election would arrive sooner rather than later — most likely late this year — and warned the League it might not have time to create a proper centrist political movement by then.

"The moment Berlusconi unleashes his counter-offensive, it would not be wise for democratic forces to be divided," he said, adding he wanted to see "a vast alliance" encompassing anyone from "democratic" Catholics to small social-democratic, socialist and republican parties.

Mr. Bossi meanwhile appeared unperturbed by the fact that opinion polls now show his party at just three to 3.5 per cent and told congress delegates the League was now seeking to spread its support beyond the north, hence its name change to show its federalist credentials should apply to the whole nation.

The movement further agreed to make itself more democratic by creating a political secretariat "to give a more collegiate hue to its decision-making processes and to aid the party's federal secretariat in drawing up party policy."

## China to mark birth of 1.2 billionth citizen

BEIJING (R) — China is marking the birth this week of its 1,200,000,000th citizen with a major new crusade against multiple-child families in its rural population and among migrant workers where controls are failing.

The State Council Monday approved the State Family Planning Commission's programme for the rest of the decade, which aims to limit the population to 1.3 billion by 2000 by slowing the natural growth rate to under 10 births per 1,000 of the population.

The growth rate was 11 per 1,000 in 1993, down from 25 in the 1970s before China adopted its strict "one couple, one child" family planning policy.

China's ultimate goal is to achieve zero population growth — a balance of births and deaths — by 2040 when numbers will have hit the 1.5 billion to 1.6 billion level, officials say.

China intends to pursue its goal undaunted by critics who allege it relies on coerced abortions and sterilisations and other rights abuses to limit births, the officials say. China denies any official support for these practices.

The nationwide campaign, which senior leaders will kick off Tuesday at the Great Hall of the People, aims to curb worrying growth rates among the country's rural population by linking family planning with aid-the-poor projects, Xinhua news agency said.

State councillor and commission chief Peng Peiyun called the campaign of financial and material incentives a "road of hope for rural family planning," Xinhua said.

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## Bob Geldof/wife reportedly by separate

LONDON (AP) — Pop star Bob Geldof and his wife, Paula Yates, are parting "for a while" after 18 years together, a British tabloid reported Sunday. The News Of The World published a handwritten letter, signed Bob and Paula, which it said it received by fax from the couple. It announced their intention to take a break from "being to each other's faces all the time."

"After 18 years of happiness together, Bob and Paula Geldof decided to have a break from each other for a while." It goes on: "They both love each other fantastically and adore their children and for them that's all that matters really."

"They will see and speak and eat with each other daily, occasionally go out together and continue to love one another. They are each other's best friend."

The report could not immediately be confirmed independently. The News Of The World claimed Miss Yates, 36, had been seeing Irish rock star Michael Hutchence since the separation, and that it had received the fax after the pair were told the paper knew of the marriage split.

A spokesman for Channel 4 television, where Paula Yates works as a morning programme host, said she would not be appearing this week. She already had been scheduled for a vacation this week, he added.

Geldof, 43, and Ms. Yates, have three children. Fif, Tribelle, Peaches and Pixie.

Verona to spruce up home of Juliet

VERONA, Italy (AFP) — A medieval palace reputed to be the home of Shakespeare's tragic lover, Juliet, is to be restored by authorities in the north Italian city of Verona, the city's mayor said Sunday.

Michela Siroi Mariotti said work would begin in September on the palace in Verona's old town, which each year attracts up to 100,000 visitors who come to stand underneath the balcony where Romeo Montague professed his love for Juliet Capulet.

In fact, the present balcony only dates from shortly before World War II, but much of the rest of the house is in desperate need of renovation after suffering damage from thousands of tourists who have left their signatures, initials, pierced love hearts and other graffiti on its walls.

The romantic legend prompted 4,479 people from all over the world to write symbolic love letters to Juliet in Verona last year, continuing a tradition established in the 1930s which has become popular particularly with the Japanese.

Japanese police arrest 4 in nude book case

TOKYO (AFP) — A photographer and the president of a publishing house were among those arrested Monday on charges of selling thousands of copies of a book of "obscene" nude photos, police said. The Metropolitan Police Department announced the arrests of photographer Tetsuo Kano, 52, Ippie Takahashi, 50, president of Takeshobo Inc., and two other executives of the publishing firm. They were charged with violating Japan's obscene picture selling control law. The charges involve the sale of nearly 60,000 copies of a nude photo collection titled "Kikuzai" ("It works!") between November and January for about 150 million yen (\$1.5 million). Police have said the pictures constitute obscenity because they present women's sexual organs in a way that is "highly indecent and graphic." Disclosure of public hair has long been considered public indecency and censored in Japan, but it has been considerably relaxed in the past year.

Wives jailed over below the belt blows

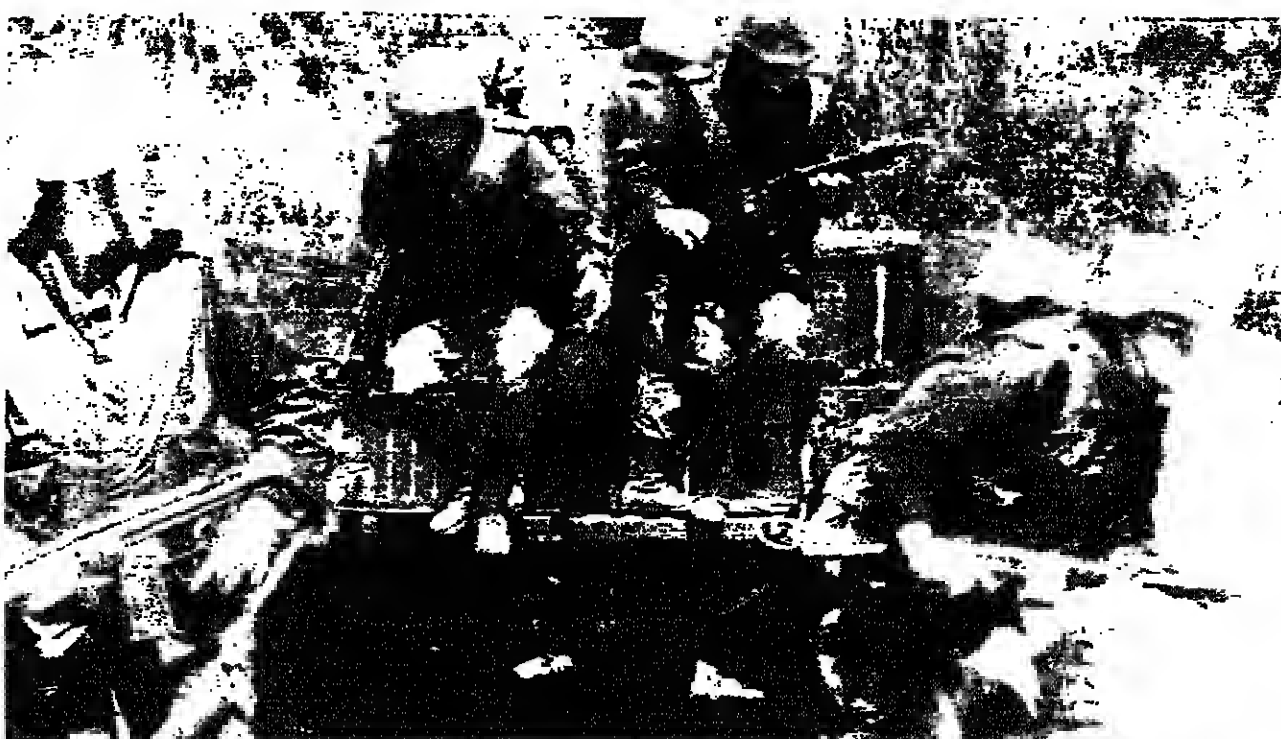
PORT MORESBY (AFP) — Two women were reported Monday to have been jailed by Papua New Guinea's national court for killing their husbands by kicking and squeezing their testicles. Debra Banira, 26, and Lucy Moro, 25, were each sentenced to 10 years imprisonment in the highlands town of Kundiwa for what Judge Salamo Injia described as "unusual" killings.

The court was told the women had attacked their husbands in separate incidents during violent domestic arguments.



World News

Bob Geldof reportedly separate



Mexican soldiers mobilise to patrol the Paraje Tibon area of Chiapas for the presence of Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN) members. The rebel EZLN fighters allegedly withdrew into the jungle ahead of the army advance (AFP photo)

Mexican rebels accuse government of abuse

SAN CRISTOBAL DE LAS CASAS, Mexico (R) — Maya Indian rebels accused the Mexican army Sunday of brutal human rights abuses in its drive into their jungle bases and pledged to protect their leader "Marcos" from attempts to capture him.

Rebel leaders in the southern state of Chiapas said four army helicopters bombed areas around the town of Morelia and La Garrucha Friday, and they accused President Ernesto Zedillo of lying by saying the army was advancing peacefully.

"You are lying, Mr. Zedillo. We are being bombed and machine-gunned," the Zapatista National Liberation Army said in a statement.

"The government of Ernesto Zedillo is killing us, it is killing children, it is beating up women and raping," the statement said.

The Zapatistas said they were pulling back to avoid combat with the army as it advances into formerly rebel-held jungle and mountain areas, which began Thursday, but warned they will block the government from catching Marcos, who has led their 15-month-old uprising.

"We will not allow anything to happen to him and if something does happen to him, we will not stand here with our arms crossed because we Zapatistas do not betray the blood of our dead," said the statement, which was signed by the rebels' clandestine leadership committee.

At least 145 people killed in January 1994 when the rebels launched their uprising for Indian rights and wider democracy. But until Friday a ceasefire had held for more than a year.

The rebel communique said thousands of civilians had been forced to flee their homes since the army pushed about 2,500 troops, backed by helicopters and small tanks, into the Leandron jungle to hunt down Marcos.

"We reiterate our readiness for dialogue and to find a political solution to this problem but on condition that the pressure on Subcommander Marcos be called off," the rebels said.

It was the first word from the Zapatistas since Mr. Zedillo ordered the clampdown Thursday. Since then, the army has taken over a string of rebel-held towns while the guerrillas have fled deeper into the jungle. Despite news reports of intermittent fighting, the government has said all is calm.

It was unclear if the army would follow the rebels in pursuit of its main target, masked Zapatista leader Subcommander Marcos.

Guatemalan President Ramiro De Leon Carpio said late Saturday he would mobilise troops on his side of the 500-mile (800 kilometres) Mexico-Guatemala border to prevent arms and rebels from leaving the neighbouring state of Chiapas.

Meanwhile Mexico's opposition National Action Party (PAN) claimed a sweeping victory early Monday in an election for governor in the western state of Jalisco, as voters turned en masse against the long-ruling party of President Zedillo.

Private polling firms who carried out sample surveys at voting booths during Sunday's vote said the PAN carried some 54 per cent against 37 per cent for the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI).

It was the first state vote since Mr. Zedillo took office last Dec. 1. If electoral returns confirm PAN triumph, it would mark only the fourth time that the PRI has lost a governorship in 65 years of unbroken national rule.

French premier unveils campaign programme  
Balladur proposes limiting own rule, cut unemployment

PARIS (AFP) — Conservative Prime Minister Edouard Balladur unveiled his presidential campaign programme Monday, promising to cut France's double-digit unemployment and to limit his own rule to a single, seven-year term.

Speaking at a podium emblazoned with his campaign slogan "Believing in France," Mr. Balladur also said that if elected, he would stage a referendum on broadening democracy and individual rights in France.

The vote would modify the constitution and in particular permit further referendums on specific issues, he said.

The prime minister, addressing a press conference attended by his senior ministers, including Interior Minister Charles Pasqua, said he backed a single mandate for French presidents.

He said he would put the proposal to parliament and the new legislation would apply to himself.

Under the present constitution, the mandate is renewable. Outgoing Socialist President Francois Mitterrand is currently completing his second seven-year term.

The first round of the presidential elections is to be held on April 23, with a second round run-off on May 7. No candidate gets 50 per cent of the vote.

Concerning France's current 12.6 per cent unemployment rate, which opinion polls say is voters' top concern, Mr. Balladur outlined a six-point plan he said would cut joblessness by 200,000 per year over the next five years. Total French unemployment now stands at about 3.3 million.

Most of the points were already known and focus on lowering employer contributions to the heavily indebted state welfare system and providing incentives for part-time work.

Mr. Balladur's main conservative rival for the presidency, neo-Gaullist leader Jacques Chirac, has focused his campaign attacks on the Balladur government's failure to bring down unemployment or deal with the growing problem of poverty in the country.

The newly chosen Socialist Party candidate, Lionel Jospin, has also sharply attacked Mr. Balladur's employment policies.

On the referendum proposal, Mr. Balladur said: "The France that I want will give greater freedom to citizens... a greater place to democracy and individual rights."

"This reform should take place by means of a referendum to be organised in the six months following the presidential election," Mr. Balladur declared.

Mr. Balladur said he wanted to broaden "the scope of the referendum" to "all subjects essential for society" and that he would stage a framework referendum within six months of his election to modify the constitution.

"The people itself must be able to decide, not only on questions touching the organisation of government... but also on all subjects essential for the reform of society," Mr. Balladur said.

In this first press conference as a candidate, Mr. Balladur said France "must change and change in depth," with the support of the French, for that was "an absolute necessity."

He went on: "The France that I want is a France of equality of opportunity," which he said he would defend through education reform, a social security system "saved from bankruptcy," and regional development plans.

Mr. Balladur said that France "has started moving again" and it was time to "move into higher gear."

The prime minister also said France should retain a leading role within the European Union and he restated his commitment to the creation of a European single currency as soon as possible "if possible on Jan. 1, 1997."

Europe was "France's chance" and the Franco-German alliance was "the pivot."

Jan. 1, 1997 is the first date set for the introduction of a single currency under the Maastricht Treaty for economic and political union in Europe. The later date is 1999.

The creation of a single currency is controversial within the rightist governing coalition which Mr. Balladur heads.

The prime minister also vowed to continue policies to cut public deficits and to maintain monetary stability.

Daily's 'after Deng' reference sets Beijing abuzz

BEIJING (R) — An influential international newspaper has set Beijing abuzz by printing the long-taboo words "after Deng Xiaoping" in a front-page story.

Officials and analysts said Monday the appearance of the phrase in Friday's reference news could not have been an oversight and showed the Communist government to be preparing the public for the 90-year-old patriarch's death.

"This is a very clear and important signal," a central government official said.

"The central government is clearly hoping to ease the Chinese public into the post-Deng period," he said.

"In my memory this is the first time that phrase has been offered so prominently to domestic readers."

Reference News, sold at many newsstands despite being a secret "internal publication," is a daily compilation of foreign news reports, many about China, prepared by the official Xinhua News Agency for government officials.

By many accounts, including those of daughter Deng Rong and a doctor, Wu Jieping, the health of the retired "chief architect" of China's market reforms has declined, fanning speculation that he may be near death.

Many Chinese say they are fascinated and frightened by the approach of what is widely seen as the death of an emperor, which could trigger a power struggle in China's leadership.

Reference News appeared to be trying to calm fears of post-Deng instability.

The words appeared in a Reuters dispatch from Washington in which President Bill Clinton's chief China adviser Winston Lord and Mr. Lord aide Peter Tomson said a looming trade war over copyright piracy in China — and Mr. Deng's death — would not affect the basic U.S. policy of broadly engaging Beijing.

The same holds true with respect to Mr. Deng's death.

"The United States foresees that after Mr. Deng Xiaoping there will be no major changes in U.S. policy toward China, although pro-Taiwan moves being considered by Congress could worsen Sino-American relations," the Chinese-language Reference News quoted Mr. Tomson as saying.

Reference News stopped short of a literal translation of Mr. Tomson's actual words "when ailing Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping dies."

"This is highly unusual, but it is not the first time," said another capital resident who, like thousands of Chinese intellectuals, pores over Reference News every day for shifts in China's political winds.

"This shows that the preparations (for Mr. Deng's death) are basically complete. This kind of thing should not come as a surprise. It should be quite normal," he added.

It remained unclear whether Mr. Deng was at his well-guarded family mansion north of Beijing's Forbidden City or, as some sources said, being treated at the army's high-tech Number 301 Hospital, where most senior leaders are cared for.

"Without top Communist party authorisation, no Chinese newspaper would dare to carry the kind of details about Mr. Deng's health that have appeared routinely in the foreign press."

In the latest such report in this week's German news weekly Der Spiegel, Mr. Deng's doctor was quoted as saying Mr. Deng had circulation problems and Parkinson's disease and that his health could face a "rapid change" at any time.

Deng Rong told the New York Times last month that her father's health was declining "day by day," but sought in a more recent interview to calm intense speculation by denying that he could no longer walk or stand.

A Beijing-funded Hong Kong daily, Ta Kung Pao, quoted her Sunday as retreating to China's official line — that Mr. Deng is "in good health for a 90-year-old" and still able to walk.

Burma-Karen fight leaves Thailand bruised

MAE SOT, Thailand (AFP) — Fighting between ethnic Karen rebels and Burmese government troops has tested Thailand's determination to stay out of the conflict.

A 10-kilometre stretch of Thai soil along the Moei River skirting the rear of the Karen National Union (KNU) camp of Kawmoora has borne the brunt of rebel supply lines over the last two weeks.

Burmese shells have repeatedly fallen wide of the mark by hundreds of metres overshooting Kawmoora's rear access and leaving Thai territory scarred.

Much of the sparsely populated district of Wangkaew, opposite Kawmoora, is now deserted. Roads are pockmarked from artillery explosions and trees have been shredded by shrapnel.

At a Buddhist temple, close to the Moei River that forms the natural border between Thailand and Burma, there is now a last crater where flowers once framed its front steps. Huts have been abandoned.

The Thai fire warning shots when gunners from the other side overshoot their mark and have moved men into the low hills and underbrush to monitor any incursions.

"This is not our fight, but we will push back anyone who tries to come into Thailand," one Thai officer said.

Burmese troops have crossed here at least once, apparently to scout the rear of the Karen rebels' last major stronghold, which has proven impervious to frontal assaults.

Rebel fighters have said in interviews with AFP that they believe the Burmese will make another attempt to cross within four days, bringing artillery with them.

"They cannot get through our front line," said one fighter, a former school teacher, celebrating his 51st birthday Sunday with meager rations of rice and chicken in his bunker.

"The SLORC wants to come to both sides of our camp and fire from there. But that is Thailand," he said.

Burmese and KNU sources in this Thai border town said that the Rangoon junta, officially known as the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), has gathered 40 trucks loaded with munitions and artillery in Myawaddy, just 20 kilometres south of Kawmoora.

But Thai military officials expressed confidence that their Burmese counterparts would not risk retaliation by crossing the Moei in strength.

Winnie backs down, apologises to Mandela

JOHANNESBURG (AFP) — Winnie Mandela Monday backed down from a confrontation with President Nelson Mandela, her estranged husband, and apologised for recent scathing remarks against his government.

In a statement, Mrs. Mandela said she had merely been trying to "assure the masses that the government and the ruling African National Congress (ANC) are aware of and concerned about the flaws that the government must still deal with."

"The impression of the people is that we neither care nor know about these things," she added. "I was trying to correct that perception."

President Mandela was reportedly stung by his estranged wife's public criticism last week of the government of national unity, in which she serves as deputy minister of arts, culture, science and technology.

Speaking at the funeral of a black policeman who was slain by white colleagues during a strike by black officers, she said the government had failed South Africans because it had not addressed racism in the workplace.

The ANC's "over-indulgence" in reconciliation efforts with the country's former white rulers, she added, was a weakness.

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News reports over the weekend said an angry president had issued an ultimatum to Mrs. Mandela either to withdraw her criticism, resign or face dismissal.

Claes criticised at NATO

BRUSSELS (AFP) — NATO Secretary General Willy Claes has come under criticism at NATO for presenting the opening of talks on security with five Middle Eastern and North African countries as a means of fighting Muslim fundamentalism, reliable sources said Monday.

NATO announced Wednesday that it was opening talks with Egypt, Israel, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia with the general aim of contributing "to security and stability in the Mediterranean as a whole."

The same day Mr. Claes was quoted in the British daily The Independent as saying that the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation's (NATO) new departure had been prompted by the rising tide of Islamic fundamentalism on the southern shores of the Mediterranean, which he termed the biggest threat to face the West since the end of the cold war.

Reliable sources here said the "dramatic and negative" slant Claes had put on the talks had been strongly criticised by several NATO ambassadors, particularly Spain, Italy and France.

One alliance diplomat stressed that the interpretation Mr. Claes had given was "entirely personal and only concerns him."

"Several ambassadors were not happy," Mr. Janowski said the BSA

SARAJEVO (R) — Besieged Muslim-civilians in the Bihac enclave in northwest Bosnia are starving under a good blockade, U.N. aid officials said Monday.

The aid officials' report coincided with a warning by U.N. peacekeepers that cooperation was deteriorating across Bosnia under the ceasefire which Muslims and Serbs signed at the new year.

Kris Janowski of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) told reporters in Sarajevo.

"The humanitarian situation is extremely critical in the enclave (Bihac) and now affects the most privileged families. The food situation is critical... the word starvation is now appropriate for the most vulnerable cases."

The isolated enclave is under attack by Muslim rebels opposed to the Bosnian government in Sarajevo, and by their Serb allies.

More than 100,000 civilians, including refugees, are surrounded in parts of Bihac still under the control of the Muslim-led government army's 5th Corps.

The rebels and Serb forces have tried to force them into surrender by blocking almost all U.N. aid convoys since the spring of 1994, with barely 15 per cent of the food they need getting through.

Government territory in Bihac is hemmed in by the rebel Muslims and Croatian Serbs from the west and north and by the Bosnian Serb Army (BSA) from the east and south.

Mr. Janowski said the BSA had promised to allow a convoy into the enclave Tuesday.

But peacekeepers reported that heavy fighting was still going on between the 5th Corps and BSA forces south and east of Bihac town.

The U.N. confirmed that some of the fighting at the weekend resulted from counter-attacks by 5th Corps forces and Serb sources said the government troops had captured territory.

U.N. observers saw at least 900 BSA reinforcements being driven towards the enclave.

U.N. peacekeeping spokesman Gary Coward said that elsewhere in Bosnia, cooperation with the ceasefire agreement was diminishing, with both sides becoming obstructive.

The truce is supposed to last for four months while political negotiators try to get a peace plan drawn up by the five major powers back on track.

The number of ceasefire violations has begun to creep up, with incidents in Sarajevo and around the Muslim enclaves of Gorazde and Srebrenica in eastern Bosnia.

The U.N. continued to express puzzlement at the inability of NATO reconnaissance aircraft to identify planes seen over the Muslim-controlled airport at Tuzla in northern Bosnia at the weekend.

U.N. soldiers using night vision goggles saw at least one cargo aircraft and a fighter aircraft circling over Tuzla Sunday night in apparent violation of the U.N. no-fly zone over Bosnia.

Mr. Coward said he could not understand why the flights were not detected by AWACS reconnaissance aircraft, which can see right across Bosnia's skies, or by NATO air patrols and added: "This is not the product of a feverish imagination of a young soldier."

Serbs have always opposed the opening of Tuzla Airport for humanitarian relief supplies in case it was also used to ship arms to Muslims.

The U.N. war crimes tribunal for Yugoslavia, based in the Hague, announced charges against 21 Serbs from the former Omarska prisoner of war camp in northern Bosnia and issued warrants for their arrest. Only one has been detained so far.

The Serbs include camp commandant Zeljko Meakic and the charges covered genocide and crimes against humanity in the conduct of the camp for Bosnian Muslim and Croat prisoners.

The prisoners were held under armed guard in brutal conditions, the court alleged. "They were murdered, raped, sexually assaulted, several beaten and otherwise mistreated."

The camp was set up in 1992 when Serbs were driving thousands of Croats and Muslims from their homes in northern Bosnia under an ethnic cleansing programme aimed at non-Serbs.

Meanwhile the self-styled Bosnian Serb parliament met Monday to discuss ongoing fighting in Bosnia and relations with Serbia amid the threat of a rift over the Western-backed peace plan for Bosnia. Serb officials said,



## Jordan Times

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## High stake for Denmark meet

MARCH WILL witness the holding of yet another world conference on par with the World Conference on Human Rights that was held in Vienna in 1993. This time the theme of the international meeting will be social development.

The first question here is whether the proliferation of global gatherings on issues of concern to humanity is the right course in terms of their cost effectiveness. Judging by the experience painfully gained at the Vienna Human Rights Conference, we wonder if assembling high-level officials from all the countries of the world for a week or so is exactly the right way to go about dealing with social, economic or human rights developments. Given the fact that practically all the nations of the world are adequately represented in the United Nations and all its auxiliary bodies, it is doubtful that any activity outside the international organisation itself would be useful enough to justify the added expense or high expectations usually generated by such international fanfares.

We can all be sure that what will be said and decided upon in Copenhagen on social development will be a mere repetition of what has already been said and done elsewhere in international fora. In fact the Vienna experiment on human rights vindicates this prognosis. As happened in the Austrian capital, Copenhagen will most probably experience the same old divisions between the haves and have-nots on how best to promote social development with no real prospect whatsoever to bridge the traditional gaps that exist among members of the international community.

Additionally, the conflicting perspectives on the issue could be accentuated and in the process they could perpetuate the standoff between North and South. This is all the more likely to happen because social development cannot be addressed independently of economic progress and economic concerns cannot be dealt with in isolation from human rights, and so on. It would seem more pragmatic and logical therefore to debate all related issues together instead of attempting to achieve the task piecemeal, as indeed the world tried in Vienna and now projected to do the same in Copenhagen.

## ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

COMMENTING ON the Arab-Israeli meeting in Washington, a columnist in Al Ra'i daily said Monday that without Israel's implementation of the Oslo and Cairo agreements, such meeting would be useless. The Israelis consider the meeting as a coalition against the enemies of peace between the Arabs and Israel, but where is that peace that is worth defending? Asked Mahmoud Rimawi. The real enemies of peace are those who place obstacle in its path and refuse to implement U.N. resolutions which call for the return of Arab lands in Syria, Lebanon and Palestine to their legitimate owners, said the writer. If Israel does not want to return the occupied territories to the Arabs, refuses to implement the Oslo agreement and denies the Palestinians their basic rights, it can by no means hope for peace, continued the writer. It is clear to all parties, including the United States and the world community, that the enemies of peace are those who continue to reject the international legitimacy and fail to honour their commitment, added the writer. Without the attainment of peace on the Israeli-Syrian and Israeli-Palestinian tracks, he said, the concept of comprehensive peace remains out of reach.

A COLUMNIST in Al Dustour landed the Turkish government for its efforts to reactivate the oil pipeline that carries oil from Iraq to the Turkish shores, and urged Arab states to take the initiative towards ensuring the success of these efforts. Mohammad Kawash said Turkey is to be commended for its quest but it would have been better to hear its government taking steps towards terminating the embargo altogether. The embargo is not justified any more and is in place to serve the interests of 18 million Iraqis, and its allies at the expense of misery of other Islamic and Arab countries, ought to take serious steps towards lifting the sanctions that have caused untold sufferings for the Iraqi people, he continued.

## The View from Fourth Circle

# Religion, NATO and the lands of chaos

By Rami G. Khouri

IN CASE you missed the news, you should know that late last week the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) declared war — more or less — on Islam. A meeting of NATO ambassadors decided to launch a dialogue with five North African Arab states in order to develop a joint strategy to combat "the security threat posed by Islamic fundamentalism," in the words of the Washington Post report.

This move comes after several years of concern in Europe that political instability and economic stagnation along its southern rim pose a greater threat to Europe in the long term than events in the former Soviet Union. NATO Secretary General Willy Claes told a security conference in Germany last weekend that ever since the cold war ended, "Islamic militancy has emerged as perhaps the single gravest threat to the NATO alliance and to Western security," according to the Washington Post.

Pretty heavy stuff, but also pretty far off the mark. Europe is not worried per se about "political instability," or mass suffering or dying throughout the Mediterranean Basin. What NATO really fears is the Mediterranean Basin — and give them credit for being honest about it — is mass Arab-Islamic emigration to Europe. It is the same fear that prompted the United States to invade Haiti last year.

Since the end of the cold war, we have heard assorted theories and frameworks that seek to give order to the new global political forces. Among the most popular are: That nationalistic warfare based on ethnic and religious identities could become more common throughout the world, and that the predominantly Christian West could find itself in an increasingly grave confrontation with Islam, or the Islamic World, or militant Muslims, or Muslim rage, or something else along those lines that is equally vague and simplistic.

As we witness the gradual fulfilment of this prophecy, we should also be challenged to better come to terms with the real nature of the confrontation that now, in round one, pits NATO against the activist Islamism of the Mediterranean Basin. It is too simplistic and easy to call this a West-Islam conflict, much as this appeals to the intellectual circus-masters in some parts of the United States and Western Europe. The problem that militant Islamism expresses is much deeper, and far older. That greater problem is hinted at but not fully grasped by some in the

West. The Economist magazine in early January said that the only major threats to the West in the near future could come from a stronger Russia, a more hostile China, or if "somebody organises an expansionary Islamic power out of the present chaos between Iran and Morocco."

Well thank you, guv, I feel much better knowing that what ails me is that I am part of "the present chaos between Iran and Morocco." (In fact, the "chaos" extends well beyond Iran and Morocco, especially to regions that Great Britain once colonised, but let's leave that for later). The relevant point is that we are now seeing the cultural, intellectual and geo-political outlines of an increasingly worried and more overtly racist Western perception of events in much of the Arab-Islamic world. That perception believes that our region is a mess, it spawns violence, it threatens European and Western basic security interests, and it has to be dealt with through the political or even military mechanism of NATO.

This is a terrible Western miscalculation and policy mistake that is likely to exacerbate the Middle East's underlying disparities and tensions, and only increase the likelihood of conflict between these two blocs of states. The spectre of NATO governments working closely with Arab-Islamic governments to suppress the indigenous expressions of political Islamism throughout the Mediterranean Basin will succeed no better than, say, the Roman imperial government's attempts to work with local vassals to outlaw Christianity in the first century A.D., or the attempts by the prevailing tribal/commercial regional power structure to quash the spread of Islam in the Hijaz and beyond in the 7th century A.D. When prevailing political-economic orders are not satisfactory to a majority of their people, they have to change in order to promote human equity and social peace, or else they will be changed against their will.

Religions — and especially religions that are pressed into the cause of political and nationalistic activism — are expressions of the deeper needs and discomforts that bring about such change. In our case, in our universe of Arab-Islamic/Middle Eastern chaos, militant Islamism emerged in the 1980s as the most natural, perhaps even the only possible, antidote to a whole range of problems that plagued and still plague our region and our cultures — problems of police states and authoritarianism, of widespread corruption and incompetence in the public sector, of

imposed and largely ineffective Western systems of governance, of increasingly grave economic and resources imbalances, and of a brand of deep social and political alienation that has many cultural, political and economic causes.

We and the West should work together to answer some very simple questions: Why is it that a once grand and productive Arab-Islamic culture has staggered towards the end of the second millennium in such a state of chaos that the world's greatest military alliance sees fit to target it as the most serious global security threat of the early years of the third millennium? Why have our people turned to the comforts of religion, historical memories, and, in some cases, violence as answers to the contemporary problems that trouble them and to the fear of a desperate future that haunts their children?

There are, in fact, reasons for our chaos, and method to our madness. Of course, it is inconvenient for the West to recall that most of the chaotic lands being targeted by NATO today were directly colonised by European powers, often for a hundred years or more. The colonial experience and its transition to post-colonial dependent statehood left us with some horrendous new countries, quite a few new railway systems, many gigantic bureaucracies, and hundreds of millions of people who now gravitate between chaos and God — between, on the one hand, the reality of brittle political-economic governance systems that are sustained only by larger and larger doses of foreign economic and security assistance, and on the other hand, the people's collective hope for a better, more human and just future.

It would be a lot more effective, less traumatic and considerably cheaper for NATO — and for us of the chaotic zones — to investigate and eliminate the causes of our chaos, rather than to flail fearfully and childishly at its surface manifestations. This is what the world has done with some intelligence and much composure in Russia, Eastern Europe, Haiti, South Africa and other distressed lands, where it has systematically tried to address the underlying causes of instability. Why does it not do it in our lands? What is it about us and our lands that has made security, rather than justice and decency, our single most important defining criterion during the last two hundred years? Are we animals who must be pacified, or humans who must live in dignity and hope? Now there's something useful for NATO to think about.



## Ecuador's fierce resistance surprises Peru in border war

By Monte Hayes

The Associated Press

QUITO — The jungle birds around Condor Mirador, an Ecuadorian military look-out atop a mountain chain on Ecuador's disputed border with Peru, have ceased their chattering. They wait in silence for the next bomb.

This past week Peruvian warplanes rocketed the base repeatedly, peppering the surrounding jungle with bombs that left 32 craters three metres deep and eight metres wide.

But the bombing raids failed to dislodge the Ecuadorian troops dug into the mountaintop. Nor have Peruvian commandos had much success in pushing Ecuadorian forces from three key border posts Peru claims are within its territory.

As the conflict over two nations' jungle border entered its third week, Peru's generals were no longer speaking of an easy victory.

Peru has an army twice the size of Ecuador's and its soldiers have honed their fighting skills in a 15-year war with Maoist guerrillas. But Ecuador has surprised its much bigger neighbour by putting up fierce resistance in the fight over a 77-kilometre portion of unmarked border.

Military experts are now saying Ecuador could bog Peru down in a long grinding standoff that would test the will of both nations to accept mounting casualties.

So far, Peru has had the heaviest losses.

The Peruvians "thought they would finish this off in 10 hours," said Luis Eladio Proano, a civilian consultant to Ecuador's Defence Ministry. "They sent in a first wave with no results. They escalated the conflict and that didn't work. Then they came in with planes, helicopters — absolutely everything — and it had no effect."

Fighting is concentrated in a 100-square-kilometre horseshoe-shaped area at the headwaters of the Cenepa River, 350 kilometres southeast of Quito and 1,000 kilometres north of Lima, the Peruvian capital.

The Ecuadorian forces hold the high ground along the river, including the heights of the 2,000-metre Condor Mountain range. From there they fire mortars down on Peruvian troops.

Both Ecuador and Peru are believed to have at least 4,000 soldiers in the river valley and adjacent areas, but fighting is taking place mainly between 50-man patrols armed with machine guns, grenades and mortars. Thick vegetation and broken terrain prevent large troop movements or use of tanks.

Those familiar with the area say it can take three hours to move 1½ kilometres through the dense jungle. The Peruvians are trying to fight their way

up 300-metre hills in 55-degree Celsius (100-degree Fahrenheit) weather. It's a region where mosquitoes and other insect abound.

Ecuador's troops have the advantage of defending familiar territory that has been traditionally controlled by Ecuador. In recent years their jungle battalions have incorporated members of local Indian tribes.

The Peruvian troops are taking losses from mined trails and concealed, Vietnam-style pits containing stakes.

Ecuador also has the advantage of short supply lines. The Ecuadorian army trucks in its ammunition to its rocket launcher batteries at Condor Mirador over a road that runs up the western side of the mountain chain.

Peru must ferry soldiers and supplies by helicopter 140 kilometres up the Cenepa River valley, which is less than 10 kilometres wide at some points. That exposes the aircraft to Ecuadorian shoulder-mounted anti-aircraft missiles.

Ecuador says its troops have shot down four Peruvian helicopters and two warplanes. Peru acknowledges the loss of two helicopters and a Canberra bomber.

Peru is also suffering higher casualties. It says 30 of its soldiers have been killed, 60 have been wounded and another 70 are missing in action. Ecuador says

11 of its soldiers have died and another 28 have been wounded.

The Ecuadorian armed forces appear confident they can hold their defensive positions indefinitely.

Mr. Proano said Peru's generals apparently thought they were going to have as easy a time in 1981 when they took an Ecuadorian border post in four days of fighting that killed eight Ecuadorian soldiers and one Peruvian soldier.

But since then Ecuador "has really done an excellent job of preparing its people for jungle warfare," he said.

Although Peru's military has at least double the manpower and equipment of Ecuador, much of its armament is old and poorly maintained, says Peruvian experts.

"The counter-insurgency struggle gave them combat experience, but it also took a toll on their equipment," said Fernando Rospiogiosi, a political scientist in Lima who has studied Peru's military.

He noted that Peru's armed forces also suffer from internal divisions and purges of the officer corps by President Alberto Fujimori.

"He has weakened the military command," Mr. Rospiogiosi said. "The people in command positions are there because they are loyal to him, not because they are the most qualified to fight a war."

## Italy's Northern League in search of new role

By Richard Waddington

Reuters

MILAN — Northern League leader Umberto Bossi has tightened his grip on the party machine with a vote of confidence, but even his supporters agree Italy's once-rampant federalists are in deep political trouble.

The mercurial Bossi, whose leadership of the party he founded has been under rare attack, won overwhelming backing from a national congress at the weekend to remain at the helm.

But the strong show of support could not hide fears for the future as the party — once Italy's fastest growing — searches for a new political role after dramatically breaking with former prime minister Silvio Berlusconi and his "Freedom Alliance."

Mr. Bossi brought down Mr. Berlusconi after seven turbulent months when he withdrew from the centre-right alliance just before Christmas, accusing the billionaire businessman of being a threat to democracy because of his huge television interests.

The league leader was unrepentant as he addressed the 5,000 cheering supporters and delegates at the three-day national congress that ended Sunday.

"We have broken the siege of 'king' Berlusconi, the Frankenstein of the (political) right," he said.

"This country has so many problems but the first was to save it from Berlusconi," he said to ringing applause.

But the decision to topple the government cost Mr. Bossi around one-third of the league's members of parliament, most of whom broke away to form a rival federalist group.

He suffered another loss during the congress when his party deputy, former interior minister Roberto Maroni, said he was quitting parliament in protest at the leader's line.

Opinion polls show the break with Mr. Berlusconi, whose government was the first to be elected since the graft scandals buried Italy's traditional parties, will also cost Mr. Bossi votes.

The surveys suggest support for the Northern League, which wants Italy turned into a federalist state to break the power of central government, has slumped to less than half the 8.5 per cent it won across the country in elections last March.

If confirmed in an election, the party would see its representation in both houses of parliament crumble to a handful of seats from the 177 it won in March.

Until the rebels broke away, the league had been the largest single party in the legislature thanks to an electoral accord with Mr. Berlusconi letting its candidates stand for the "Freedom Alliance" across much of the rich north.

"We seem to have taken the wrong turning, down a street with no exit," said a despondent Francesco Tablandini, league leader in the senate (upper house).

Mr. Bossi may have scuttled his arch-enemy Berlusconi but his plan for an alternative parliamentary alliance with opposition parties was thwarted by the rebellion within his own party.

New Prime Minister Lamberto Dini, a former central banker, comfortably won confidence votes, but only because Mr. Berlusconi and his allies in the hard-right national alliance abstained.

Mr. Dini, who presides over a cabinet of non-partisan technocrats, has said he will stand down as soon as he has completed a limited programme of economic and political reform.

This could be as early as June, leaving the embattled league leader with little time to prepare a new political strategy.

Mr. Bossi told delegates he wanted the league to become the hub of a new centrist political alliance independent of Mr. Berlusconi on the right and the former communist Democratic Party of the left (PDS) on the political left.

But critics say the electoral reform that has put a largely first-past-the-post vote in the place of the almost pure proportional electoral system of the past, means Italy is moving towards a two-party system with no middle ground.

"We have to choose, either with the alliance (of Berlusconi) or with the left. (If we remain) alone we are heading for defeat," Mr. Maroni said in his resignation speech to the congress.

But if the unpredictable Mr. Bossi opts to ally himself with the PDS in the coming general election, there are big doubts whether his electorate will follow him.

Bedrock support for the league comes from small businessmen and the self-employed artisans of the rich north for whom the party was an outlet for anger at inefficient and expensive government in Rome. For them, the left means more taxes and more government interference.

"The polls say that if we go with the PDS, our electorate will not follow us," said league parliamentarian Antonio Marano.

Following are the texts on Sunday in Washington, Jordan, Egypt and Israel Liberation Organisation Warren Christopher.

Statement by Secretary Israeli-Palestinian Council Washington, DC.

THIS morning I had a productive meeting with President Peres and Nasser Shah. Both made it unmistakably clear that Israel and Palestinians — while aware of the challenges they face — are committed to a real partnership with one another in using that partnership to reach real peace. And expressed their determination that there can be no turning back and that they must find ways to meet the challenges ahead. Towards the end, they agreed on the following statement which I want to report to you.

First, both Israelis and Palestinians made clear their determination to fulfill the elements of their agreement and to ensure their implementation.

Second, both parties expressed understanding of one another's needs and requirements. They affirmed that fulfilling these needs requires a cooperative and inter-related approach.

## Philippines suspect w

MANILA (Agencies) — The alleged mastermind behind the 1993 World Trade Center bombing in New York was also charged in connection with a blast on a Philippine Airlines flight that killed one person in December, authorities said Monday.

The statement marked the first official confirmation here that Ramzi Yousef, who was arrested in Pakistan and extradited to the United States last week, had been in the Philippines.

Philippine National Police (PNP) chief Recaredo Sarmiento said earlier Monday that the Philippine Airlines (PAL) bombing was a "yes run" for other plots here including an attack on Pope John Paul II during his January visit and on U.S. commercial airliners and foreign embassies.

Chief Superintendent Romeo Acop, director of the criminal investigation service, said charges of murder, attempted murder and illegal possession of explosives would be filed against Mr. Yousef and two other unidentified people.

A stewardess aboard the Manila-Cebu-Tokyo PAL flight on Dec. 11 has identified Mr. Yousef as being among the passengers before a bomb went off in mid-air, killing a Japanese businessman and injuring six others, authorities said.

Mr. Acop also said a sample of the suspect's handwriting, taken from an information sheet he filled in when he bought his ticket, had been sent to the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) for analysis.

Charges were being filed against the others so that police could "secure a war-

Hundreds pro (Continued)

wounds on his way to hospital.

Israel Radio said he was apparently taking a passenger towards the West Bank Jewish settlement of Maale Adumim, on a main road that also leads to the Palestinian self-rule area of Jericho.

Jerusalem police chief Arye Amit told army radio: "The main direction of the investigation at this stage is motive."

Asked if the attack might have been timed to coincide with the anniversary of a Jewish settler's killing of more than 30 Muslim worshippers in Hebron a year ago, Amit said: "It could be that in the end we will reach that conclusion."

Witnesses said the taxi had stopped about 500 metres short of an army checkpoint. Police found a knife on a rocky hillside leading to the village.

Parliamentary border police rounded up dozens of Arabs near the scene and in Palestinian neighbourhoods on the Arab East Jerusalem. Palestinian sources said only a fraction of Gaza's 23,000 labourers who work in Israel showed up at a time for



# News

## Washington communiques reaffirm commitment to peace

Following are the texts of statements issued after a meeting on Sunday in Washington by the foreign ministers of Jordan, Egypt and Israel, representative of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher:

Statement by Secretary of State Warren Christopher on Israeli-Palestinian conclusions reached at Blair House, Washington, DC.

THIS morning I had a very productive meeting with Shimon Peres and Nabeel Sha'ath. Both made it unmistakably clear that Israeli and Palestinians — while aware of the challenges they face — are committed to a real partnership with one another and to using that partnership to reach real peace. And both expressed their determination that there can be no turning back and that they must find ways to overcome the challenges ahead. Towards this end, they agreed on the following statements which I want to report to you.

First, both Israelis and Palestinians made clear their determination to fulfill all elements of their agreements and to ensure their implementation.

Second, both parties expressed understanding for one another's needs and requirements. They also affirmed that fulfilling these needs requires a cooperative and inter-related approach.

their commitment to negotiate promptly all aspects of the interim agreement, including transfer of authority and redeployment in the rest of the West Bank, and elections, in accordance with the Declaration of Principles.

Finally, both parties agreed that these understandings can help to build the trust and confidence so necessary to being able to move forward expeditiously through all phases of this process. Both sides expressed their determination to use these understandings to work towards a successful Israeli-Palestinian meeting next week.

Blair House joint communiqué: The U.S., Egypt, Israel, Jordan, the Palestinian Authority

Washington, DC, Feb. 12, 1995

ON FEBRUARY 12, 1995, the United States hosted a follow-up meeting in Washington of the Feb. 2, 1995 Cairo Summit of representatives from Israel, Egypt, Jordan, and the Palestinian Authority. President Clinton, accompanied by Vice President Gore, addressed the gathering which was attended by Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres.

Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa, Jordanian Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Al-Kabani, Palestinian Authority Minister of Planning and International Cooperation Nabeel Sha'ath, Secretary of State Warren Christopher, and Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Victor Posolovskiy who participated as an observer.

The five participants acknowledged the leadership of Egypt's President Hosni Mubarak in hosting the Cairo Summit. Building on that historic meeting, the five participants reaffirmed their determination to consolidate the breakthroughs achieved in the Arab-Israeli peace process, to overcome obstacles and disputes, and to push forward towards a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the region based on United Nations Security Council Resolution 242 and 338 thus leading to a lasting reconciliation among the peoples of the Middle East cemented by bonds of mutual respect and dignity, tolerance, cooperation, security, and peaceful relations.

Towards this end, the five parties represented in Washington have joined together to act to further cooperation in support of

peace. Because peace requires concerted action, the parties agreed to explore practical steps in the political, economic, security, and human dimension areas of education and culture. They also agreed to meet as necessary to consult and to coordinate action in these areas. Experts will follow up in each of these areas as appropriate.

In the political area, the parties reaffirmed their strong commitment to honouring those agreements already concluded in letter and spirit and to accelerate negotiations on all tracks. The Secretary of State reported on the conclusions reached between Israel and the Palestinian Authority that constitute an integral part of this communiqué. The participants in today's meeting welcomed the results achieved by Israel and the Palestinian Authority and pledged to do all they could to support the conclusion of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. The parties also expressed appreciation for the continuation of the implementation of the Israeli-Jordanian peace treaty in all its aspects. They further expressed the hope that a peace agreement between Israel and both Syria and Lebanon

could be reached soon, leading to comprehensive peace.

With respect to security, the parties agreed that there can be no real peace in the region without security and stability. The parties declared that they are committed to combat all acts that aim to destroy the peace process, particularly acts of terrorism and violence and to stand staunchly against and put an end to all such acts. The parties reaffirmed the intention expressed at the Cairo Summit that within the framework of peace and reconciliation in the region, with enhanced security, economic prosperity and a higher standard of living for their people, they intend to achieve equal security and mutual confidence at lower levels of armaments, appreciating President Mubarak's disarmament proposal on weapons of mass destruction. The parties shall pursue a mutually verifiable Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction, nuclear, chemical and biological, and their delivery systems.

In the economic area, they reaffirmed the importance of fostering economic development and investment in the region. The parties agreed to support assistance to Palesti-

nians and the development and strengthening of the Palestinian economy through various means, including the creation of industrial zones in the West Bank and Gaza. The parties are committed to explore the removal of barriers to trade. They will also explore ways to promote liberalised trade between the parties and the United States. In this regard, the parties expressed appreciation to the United States for its proposal to extend duty free treatment to products from industrial zones that may be established in Taba, Eilat, and Aqaba. The United States will consult further with the parties and the U.S. Congress on this matter. At the same time, the parties took note of progress and agreed to continue their efforts towards the establishment of a Middle East Development Bank. Such an institution would serve to fund development projects and the promotion of private sector investment.

To underscore the public-private partnerships embodied in the Casablanca Declaration, the four parties agreed to the promotion of private sector projects. The parties will work together with the private sector for the success of the Amman Eco-

nomic Summit in October.

In the human dimension, the parties also agreed on the need to build bridges between peoples, to overcome barriers to understanding, and to share knowledge and expertise to deal with common problems. The parties also agreed to explore the possibilities of new and more creative forms of cooperation in these areas.

Finally, the parties pledged to work to ensure that there can be no turning back in the Arab-Israeli peace process. They agreed to do all in their power to work towards the achievement of a comprehensive peace and to create a Middle East with peace, security and economic prosperity for all the people of the region. In this regard, they pledged their continued support for the efforts and contributions of the multilateral track of the peace process.

In light of our commitment to pursue a comprehensive peace, the United States will be consulting with its Russian co-sponsor, the European Union as well as with Norway, Japan and other regional participants in the peace process on ways to promote progress and reach our common goals.

## Philippines to charge New York suspect with airline bombing

MANILA (Agencies) — The alleged mastermind behind the 1993 World Trade Center bombing in New York will also be charged in connection with a blast on a Philippine Airlines flight that killed one person in December, authorities said Monday.

The statement marked the first official confirmation here that Ramzi Yousef, who was arrested in Pakistan and extradited to the United States last week, had been in the Philippines.

Philippine National Police (PNP) chief Recaredo Sarmiento said earlier Monday that the Philippine Airlines (PAL) bombing was a "test run" for other plots here including an attack on Pope John Paul II during his January visit and on U.S. commercial airliners and foreign embassies.

Chief Superintendent Romeo Acop, director of the criminal investigation service, said charges of murder, attempted murder and illegal possession of explosives would be filed against Mr. Yousef and two other unidentified people.

A stewardess aboard the Manila-Cebu-Tokyo PAL flight on Dec. 11 has identified Mr. Yousef as being among the passengers before a bomb went off in mid-air killing a Japanese businessman and injuring six others, authorities said.

Mr. Acop also said a sample of the suspect's handwriting, taken from an information sheet he filled in when he bought his ticket, had been sent to the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) for analysis.

Charges were being filed against the others so that police could "secure a war-

rrent of arrest against them in case they will be sighted in the country again," Mr. Acop said.

Mr. Sarmiento said a Jan. 7 raid on a Manila apartment which Mr. Yousef's group was using uncovered vital evidence.

The room was listed in the name of Najib Owaidah Haddad, "who after further analysis of seized documents, turned out to be Ramzi Yousef," Mr. Sarmiento alleged.

The timely conveyance of vital information... can be said to have prevented the implementation of plans to harm the Pope, U.S. aircraft and foreign embassies, and which consequently led to the arrest of Yousef in Pakistan," Mr. Sarmiento said.

Mr. Sarmiento said Mr. Yousef was part of a group of 15 to 20 foreigners and five Filipinos allegedly involved in planning the attacks here, adding that the others were still at large.

Police earlier said that among the items seized in the apartment were a monk's cassock, a bible, pictures of the Pope and a map of the Pope's route.

When asked about earlier claims by the government that two foreign Muslims were arrested during their raid on the apartment, Mr. Sarmiento just smiled and refused to speak.

The government later changed its position and said no one was arrested in the raid.

Mr. Sarmiento would not say when Mr. Yousef left the country for Pakistan.

The raid on the apartment, located near the route often travelled by the Pope during his visit here from Jan. 12 to

16, uncovered "a computer, documents, timing devices and other materials," for use in making "glycerine/nitro cellulose explosives."

Mr. Sarmiento said the government was cooperating with U.S. federal authorities and other foreign governments to identify the other conspirators adding that "valuable pieces of material evidence," were made available to the FBI.

Mr. Yousef had been in Manila since last year but police got on his trail only on Jan. 6 when a fire broke out in room 306 of an apartment building in which he was believed to be making bombs.

Police said Mr. Yousef, variously identified as a Pakistani or an Iraqi, escaped during the fire but two of his associates were captured.

Police described Mr. Yousef as a "master of disguises" who has 12 aliases. Intelligence files say he is blind in the right eye and has a weakness for women.

Mr. Sarmiento said the liquid bomb which exploded on the PAL flight and forced it to land in Okinawa was made of the same materials found in the apartment where Mr. Yousef was staying.

The explosive material consisted of bits of cotton soaked in nitroglycerine and other chemicals. Investigators noted nitroglycerine was a very unstable liquid which could explode even if shaken only slightly.

They said Mr. Yousef used an Italian name, Arnaldo Forlani, in boarding the PAL plane in Manila. The bomb was planted when the aircraft flew to the central Philippine island of Cebu, where it picked up Japanese passengers.

Washington Sunday showed "the existence of pressure on the Palestinian Authority for it to take firm measures against the Islamic opposition."

Meanwhile, more than 100 members of Palestinian groups opposed to the peace process with Israel held a sit-in Monday in Damascus to protest the arrests by the self-rule authority and others by the Israeli army on the West Bank.

The demonstrators, who gathered at the Syrian offices of the International Committee of the Red Cross, gave Red Cross officials a message condemning "Yasser Arafat's submission to the conditions of the Israeli government and his commitments to Israel."

Israel and the PLO Monday agreed on a system for ensuring regular deliveries of petrol to the autonomous Gaza Strip.

Israel will deliver fuel to its border with the Strip, where Palestinians will take charge of the distribution themselves.

The new system was agreed by Israeli Energy Minister Gonen Segev and Palestinian Economic Minister Ahmad Qouria during talks at the Erez crossing between Israel and the Strip.

Israel halted deliveries of fuel to Gaza after opponents of the peace process ambushed a convoy of tankers a week ago.

## 'Verifying the kill' scandal refuses to die down

TEL AVIV (AP) — Allegations that Israeli soldiers have ordered to kill wounded enemies have been rekindled by the death of an officer reportedly mistaken for a Lebanese guerrilla and shot by his own comrades.

According to media reports, major Kiwan Hamed's own troops shot him from a far, and then, still thinking he was a guerrilla, approached to pump bullets into his head to make sure he was dead.

The army denies that the long-rumored procedure known as "verifying the kill" exists: the prospect is unsettling for a military that prides itself on its high standard of ethics in the battlefield.

But the army's denials have been challenged by numerous testimonies — and a videotape Israel TV aired on Sunday that showed troops shooting to death a Palestinian who lay wounded on the ground.

The videotape, filmed four months ago by a Palestinian cameraman, showed Israeli troops carefully approaching and killing the prostrate Palestinian, whom had they shot minutes earlier after he

stabbed a soldier.

A retired colonel who once headed an elite commando unit told the Associated Press the procedure emerged in the 1970s as part of the doctrine of fighting hostage-holding extremists.

Because the army feared the extremists were carrying explosive belts and might activate them even if wounded, the policy was introduced to save hostages, said the officer, speaking on condition of anonymity.

He said Monday that the practice is used when soldiers do not have time to check which enemy still presents a danger or in commando activities when taking a prisoner is impossible.

Yizhar Beer, director of the Israeli human rights group B'tselem, said his organisation found that the procedure had been used several times in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

"Soldiers have a full right to protect themselves and to shoot and kill during battle," Mr. Beer said Monday. "From the moment the battle is over, they have to protect

the lives of wounded people and keep prisoners alive."

Nisham Isha's son, under-cover soldier Elia Isha, was mistakenly killed by comrades who thought he was a Palestinian during a July 1992 raid in the West Bank. The elder Isha told the Maariv newspaper that an investigation showed his son was shot four times in the back and twice in the back of the head after he was already lying wounded on the ground.

"My son didn't have a chance," he said. "If it wasn't for this practice, my son could very well still be alive."

According to media reports that began to leak out last week, the tactic was mistakenly employed against Hamed, a commander from the Druze minority on Dec. 19, in an Israeli-controlled zone in south Lebanon, the druse, a religious sect with roots in Islam, serve in the army and are generally loyal to the Jewish state.

A soldier who participated in the battle told the Kol Ha'ir weekly that while storming a building believed held by guerrillas, troops did

not notice Hamed was missing and shot at a man standing outside.

"The man fell. We went close, a few soldiers, and saw that he was lying on his side," the soldier was quoted as saying. "One carried out the 'verifying the kill' procedure as we were taught in many exercises — to shoot a wounded guerrilla in the head to make sure he is dead."

The battle continued in heavy fog and rain, and only later did the soldiers realise they had shot Hamed, their commander, Kol Ha'ir said. It was not clear when exactly Hamed died.

Last week, the army was reported to have withheld details of the incident from Hamed's family.

On Sunday, Communications Minister Shulamit Aloni of the liberal Meretz party demanded that army chief-of-staff Amnon Shahak come clean about the procedure at Sunday's weekly cabinet meeting, Israel Radio said.

General Shahak replied that there was no such policy and soldiers never shoot know-

ingly at anyone who "does not pose a danger," the radio said.

"When the battle is over no soldier is permitted to shoot at an enemy who surrenders or does not pose a threat," echoed Captain Danny Seamans, an army spokesman.

On Friday, Gen. Shahak appointed retired Gen. Moshe Levy, a former army chief of staff, to investigate the incident. But calls mounted Sunday to remove the inquiry from the army's hands and widen its scope.

"We believe the publications are true: the officer was killed by what is called in the army 'verifying the kill,'" druse legislator Salah Tarif told a news conference. "I'm convinced that cover-up machine will now resume operation."

He demanded that the army's northern commander, Major General Amiram Levine, in charge of Lebanese operations, be suspended, and that Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin appoint an investigator from outside the army.

## Israel, PLO talk peace but remain apart

(Continued from page 1) but all acts that aim to destroy the peace process, particularly acts of terrorism," the joint communiqué said.

They "agreed to support assistance to Palestinians and the development and strengthening of the Palestinian economy."

The statement welcomed "the U.S. proposal to extend duty free treatment to products from the industrial zones to be created in the West Bank and Gaza."

The statement said that the parties had agreed to plans to strengthen the Palestinian economy and also welcomed a U.S. plan to create free trade zones in the Egyptian city of Taba, Eilat in Israel and Aqaba.

The parties said little in the joint statement about the disagreement between Egypt and Israel over Israel's refusal to sign the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Israel has said that as long as it is surrounded by enemies, it will not forswear any weaponry.

Mr. Christopher said Israel had promised not to build

any new settlements on the West Bank, confiscate land or use public funds to assist Jewish settlers in the territory.

Mr. Christopher, summing up the day, said that "beyond the continued violence... there still lies the opportunity to secure what President Clinton once called a quiet miracle of a normal life."

Quoting Mr. Arafat, Mr. Clinton told the assembled ministers and other officials: "We cannot allow (rising terrorism) to kill the Palestinian dream."

Mr. Clinton sat at the head of a long, polished table in the garden room of Blair House, the presidential guest quarters across Pennsylvania Avenue from the White House.

Attending the one-day conference were Mr. Peres, Amr Musa of Egypt, Abdul Karim Al-Kabani of Jordan and Dr. Sha'ath.

Mr. Christopher presided, with Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Viktor Posolovskiy representing his government. To help give the meeting a high profile, Vice President

Al Gore and National Security Adviser Anthony Lake joined in the opening.

Meanwhile, Israeli Industry Minister Micha Harish and Palestinian Economics Minister Ahmad Qouria announced plans to build a half-dozen industrial parks along the West Bank and Gaza borders. This will help provide some replacement jobs for Palestinians.

But, Mr. Clinton said, "we are not going to let the peace process collapse. Today it is for us to begin to take the specific steps necessary to have the message of peace and renewed commitment carried out."

He urged all sides to take advantage of the accord Israel has signed with Egypt, Jordan and the PLO, suggesting they set up industrial free trade zones in the West Bank and Gaza. He pledged to support them by asking Congress to remove duties on imports from the zones.

"I want to do our part," Mr. Clinton said. "We need to move as quickly as we can to prove there are economic benefits to peace."

## Arabs seek united stand on

(Continued from page 1) English-language daily Iran News. Mr. Kharazi said he believed Israel would not be pressured into signing the treaty.

"But whether or not Israel signs the treaty, the Third World, including Iran, are seriously considering not agreeing to its unlimited extension," he said.

Washington is urging signatories to renew the treaty indefinitely at a meeting due to be held in April instead of adopting it for another limited period.

The head of the Iranian Atomic Energy Organisation, Reza Amrollahi, hinted last week that Iran would continue to adhere to the treaty.

But he called for a "nuc-

lear-free" Middle East and urged the NPT to be revised to require Israel to have its nuclear facilities inspected.

Russia meanwhile rejected U.S. criticism of its nuclear cooperation pact with Iran and implied it would continue to help Tehran build a nuclear power station.

Responding to U.S. fears that nuclear power plants in Iran could be used to manufacture plutonium for military purposes, Georgy Kaurav, spokesman for Russia's nuclear energy ministry, said Moscow would continue to help countries that complied with requirements set by the International Atomic Energy Agency.

"Russia is fulfilling all its obligations under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty,"

he said. "The position of the United States is incomprehensible."

Russia said on Monday last week that it would help Iran complete construction of the Bushehr nuclear power plant, which was started by Germany but stopped after the 1979 Islamic revolution.

Mr. Kaurav said refusing help to certain countries that fulfilled international requirements and helping others could lead to a breakdown of international agreements on non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

In an interview on NBC television Sunday, White House Chief of Staff Leon Panetta said the United States hoped Russia would not sell nuclear materials to Iran.

## Sawt Al Shaab suspended

(Continued from page 12) Monday of a "conspiracy." "The government is planning to liquidate the company through legal means and to sell its assets to a certain group through auction at a price not exceeding JD 600,000," she claimed.

Sultan Hattab, a former

chief editor of the paper who holds some shares in the company, said the government's decision was "unfair because liquidating the company would lead to losses of 980 shareholders from the private sector," which holds 33 per cent of the stock.

## Chechen truce announced

(Continued from page 1) kilometres west of Grozny. The reported ceasefire came amid reports of continued shelling of Chechen villages southwest of Grozny Monday morning, the Interfax news agency said.

The news agency also said fighting continued in Grozny, and that Chechen forces still

controlled several districts in the southern part of the devastated capital, where Russia claims to have routed forces loyal to Mr. Dudayev.

The war has claimed thousands of lives and forced hundreds of thousands of Chechens from their homes. The Chechen capital has been largely destroyed and surrounding villages have been heavily damaged in

Russian bombardments.

In recent days, Russian forces have consolidated their grip on Grozny, although rebel forces continue to hold out in several pockets of resistance. The fighting has mostly spread to villages east and west of the capital.

Interfax reported that the Russian Army Monday shelled the village of Argun, 30 kilometres east of Grozny. The village has withstood weeks of pounding by Russian artillery.

The news agency said the villages of Alkhan-Kala and Alkhan-Yurt, about 10 kilometres southwest of the capital, also came under attack.

## Egyptians protest law

(Continued from page 12) headline in the liberal paper Al Wafd.

The doctors, pharmacists and engineers unions were meeting on Monday to discuss a possible strike or a protest march to the palace of President Hosni Mubarak. They also said negotiations were under way with members of parliament to repeal the law.

Strikes and marches are banned in Egypt under emergency laws passed after the assassination of President Anwar Sadat in 1981. An attempt by lawyers to march on the palace last year ended in violence when police broke it up.

Mr. Mubarak has often

said he will not allow religious parties. He has called the Brotherhood "terrorists" and has said Egypt will never become like Algeria, where thousands of people have been killed in a conflict between the army and militants.

The Brotherhood has been banned as a political group since 1954. Sadat released its leaders from prison in the early 70s, tolerating their activities in the hope of weakening leftist opposition.

The Brotherhood calls for establishment of a strict Islamic state in Egypt, but without the violence espoused by militant groups waging a bloody campaign to overthrow the government since 1992.



## Yemen cracks down on merchants as economy slumps

SANAA (R) — Yemeni authorities have arrested all the country's wholesalers to stop prices from spiralling further, an official newspaper said.

Merchants said more than 150 people were arrested in the capital Sanaa since the crackdown was launched on Saturday. Hundreds more were arrested in other provinces.

"All wholesale merchants throughout the country were arrested on the orders from the prosecution in order to stop price manipulation,

especially of food prices," the official 14 October newspaper said on Sunday. It did not say how many.

Yemenis say locally produced vegetables, meat and eggs have risen by 60 to 100 per cent in price over the past few weeks.

The price of imported goods has shot up as Yemen's currency continues to lose value on the foreign exchange markets.

Merchants and diplomats said they doubted the crackdown would help ease a long-

standing economic crisis worsened by a two-month civil war last year and border tensions with neighbouring oil giant Saudi Arabia.

"We are not responsible for the deterioration of the economic situation, inflation or pressure on the local currency," one merchant said.

Economists and diplomats estimate inflation at an annual 60 to 100 per cent. Unemployment is running at 30 per cent of the estimated workforce of four million.

"The best the crackdown

can achieve is to stop prices from further increasing ahead of Eid Al-Fitr," one diplomat said of the feast at the end of February marking the end of Ramadan.

The government held talks this year with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, but diplomats said it did not seem to be acting on their recommendations.

The IMF was reported to have recommended unifying the two-tier exchange rate to 50-55 riyals per dollar, re-

placing an official rate of 12 riyals and a central bank-sanctioned free rate of 84 riyals. The riyal trades at about 110-120 to the dollar on the illegal black market.

Yemeni officials in private accuse Riyadh of buying up hard currency in Yemen to weaken the riyal and say subsidised goods are smuggled across Yemen's porous borders to Saudi Arabia.

One official said the Saudis wanted to worsen Yemen's economic problems to wrest concessions in the border

talks.

The accusations, which have also been made by opposition parties in Yemen, could not be confirmed independently.

President Ali Abdullah Saley said Saturday Yemen "faces a conspiracy targeting the national economy and aimed at forcing the Yemeni people to kneel through starving them."

Without referring to Riyadh, he said the Yemeni nation was capable of confronting the conspiracy.

## Romania targets \$1b trade with Syria

DAMASCUS (R) — Syria has many opportunities which Romania's private and public investors could use to boost business with the Arab country, Romania's Foreign Affairs Minister Teodor Viorel Melescanu said Monday.

"Syria comes in the second place of our trade partners in the region after Egypt. There is a big chance to take Syria to the first position if greater efforts were exerted," Mr. Melescanu told Reuters in Damascus after talks with Syrian leaders.

"The volume of our trade (with Syria) is currently around \$200 million (per year) but we believe there are all the elements which would allow us to increase it to over \$1 billion," he said.

Banyas refinery, with a capacity of 120,000 b/d, in the late 1970s. It also built a cement factory near the northern city of Aleppo.

Mr. Melescanu said Romania's Industrial Export Company recently won \$60 to \$70 million project to increase the capacity of Syria's Jbeisa gas treatment plant.

He said cooperation between the Syrian and Romanian private sectors was increasing rapidly especially after the Romanian revolution in 1989.

"Believe it or not about 4,000 Syrian private companies are operating now in Romania. Most of these are engaged in trade and services activities," he said.

Mr. Melescanu said he was leaving to Lebanon later in the day to discuss with Lebanese leaders what share Romanian companies could have in the country's multi-billion-dollar reconstruction programme.

He said the visit would be in reply to one by Lebanon's Prime Minister Rafik Al Hariri to Romania at the end of last year during which the reconstruction issue was discussed.

"We intend to prepare for participation of Romanian companies in the reconstruction programme in Lebanon. We discussed a lot of concrete possibilities during Mr. Hariri's visit to Romania and we will follow up this issue," he said.

He said he also expressed Romania's desire to participate in bidding for the construction of a third oil refinery in Syria with a capacity of processing 60,000 barrels of crude oil per day (b/d).

Romania built Syria's

United Company for Land Transport held an ordinary meeting Feb. 26, 1995 to discuss company's operations for 1994. The balance sheet shows that the JD 5 million capital company had JD 1.4 million last year and JD 535,600 in 1994. As such, operating loss amounted to JD 208. The company is expected to distribute 10,000 in dividends, or 10 per cent (Al Aswaq).

According to statistics by the Ministry of Industry and Trade a total of 10 companies with JD 21.4 million in capital were registered in the ministry in December 1994, compared to 10 companies with JD 28.4 million in capital in December 1993. The number of companies which were dissolved in 1994 was 70 compared to 70 in 1993. Investments in capital during the last quarter of 1994 totalled JD 10 (Al Aswaq).

## Iran aims to be energy cross-roads to Central Asia and Europe

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran is aiming to establish itself as an indispensable partner in international oil and gas projects in Central Asia and Europe, but is hampered by financial and political problems.

Tehran, at the heart of the world's richest region in hydrocarbons, is seeking to promote a vast network of gas and oil pipelines — dubbed recently by an Iranian daily "the pipelines of peace."

It is also hoping to head off potential competition from foreign companies bidding for lucrative oil and gas contracts in the region, especially the Americans.

Among the projects currently under study are gas pipelines from Turkmenistan to Europe, from Qatar to Pakistan, from Oman to India and from Iran to Armenia — all with Iran at the centre.

Oil pipelines from Azerbaijan to Europe and from Kazakhstan to Europe through Iran are also being discussed.

These projects would allow Tehran to levy high transit

fees and use the network for its own oil and gas exports. Iran is the fourth largest producer of oil and possesses the world's second biggest gas reserves which remain largely unexploited but are expected to replace oil as a main source of energy and hard currency earnings in the neighbouring countries, foreign diplomats in Tehran said.

The Iranian daily Kayhan International has dubbed the projects "the pipelines of peace," saying they could "facilitate the creation of a climate of cooperation and boost neighbourly principles in the region."

Tehran is also worried by the arrival of Western oil companies, especially the Americans, in the newly-independent countries of Central Asia and the Caucasus, where the Islamic republic considers it has a strategic interest.

"We cannot be content to passively watch foreigners extract oil from the Caspian," an Iranian official said earlier this week in explaining Tehran's present efforts to enter a deal between Azer-

baijan and an international consortium to develop offshore oil fields in the Caspian Sea.

The most spectacular project under consideration is a pipeline to transfer Turkmen natural gas to Europe via Iran and Turkey by the end of this century.

Iranian officials have vastly published the \$9 billion project and held an official inauguration ceremony here last year, but it is far from being realised, according to Western experts.

Ways of financing the project remain unresolved and studies have not yet worked out the details of the route, the experts said raising doubts about Iran's ability to pay around \$3.5 billion for its share of the construction costs.

Iran is currently facing a financial crisis and difficulty in attracting foreign investment for domestic projects.

A proposed pipeline to ship Iranian natural gas to Pakistan is also uncertain. A preliminary agreement has been signed between the two countries, but the financing

— estimated at \$3.5 to \$4 billion — is still to be worked out pending the formation of an international consortium.

Joint projects with Central Asia to build oil pipelines are more realistic as they are less costly, but face political hurdles.

Countries like Kazakhstan remain wary of Iran's intentions, and the United States like Russia, which is involved in most of the oil projects in Central Asia, are opposed to a route through Iran.

Washington is against it for political reasons and Moscow for economic, preferring the crude to be transported through its own territory.

Iran is unlikely to secure a share in transporting Kazakh oil and possibly that from Azerbaijan, despite having put pressure on Baku, the experts said.

"Financial difficulties along with the wide-ranging distrust of Iran makes the success of the Tehran's 'pipeline diplomacy' pursued in the past two years far from certain," a European diplomat said.

## Arab Gulf countries become key investors in Arab industry

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Gulf states have become the main investors in Arab industry as they strive to diversify their economies and minimise the impact of low oil prices, official figures have shown.

The six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states accounted for more than one third of total Arab investment in non-oil industries at the end of 1993, according to figures by the Abu Dhabi-based Arab Monetary Fund (AMF) and the Gulf Organisation for Industrial Consultancy (GOIC).

By the end of 1993, GCC countries had invested nearly \$19 billion in the non-oil industrial sector compared with a total Arab industrial investment of \$53 billion, the figures showed.

The figures did not include GCC investments in petrochemicals and other oil-related products, which exceeded \$15 billion.

"Investment in the industrial sector in the GCC picked up after oil prices began to decline in mid-1980s," a Gulf bank manager told AFP.

"The industrial sector is now one of key sectors after it was negligible 15 years ago. I think the focus will be on such a sector in future due to low oil prices," he said.

Industrial investment by GCC states — Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) — did not exceed \$5 billion in 1975 and \$9 billion by the end of 1980

as most funds were pumped into the development of the oil sector.

Increased investments pushed up the industrial sector's contribution to the gross domestic product (GDP) from around 4.5 per cent in 1980 to 8.1 per cent in 1990 and 9.1 per cent in 1993, according to the figures.

A breakdown showed Saudi Arabia, the world's top oil producer and exporter, was the biggest Arab investor in the industrial sector, spending nearly \$11.1 billion by the end of 1993.

Investment stood at \$2.9 billion in the UAE, at \$1.9 billion in Kuwait, \$803 million in Qatar, \$684 million in Bahrain and around \$502 million in Oman.

GOIC figures estimated GCC industrial exports at around \$9 billion in 1993, covering mostly chemicals, paper, cement and other building materials, spare parts, clothes and textile, food and home appliances.

Despite the investments, oil still provides more than 80 per cent of the GCC's income because of the lack of heavy industry, experts said.

But GCC nations have been seeking technology for such industries from their main economic partners, Japan, the United States and the European Union, which have remained discouraged by the relatively small regional market and restrictions on foreign ownership in projects.

## Norway to slash oil costs by 40-50% by '98

OSLO (R) — Norway's oil industry has announced plans to cut costs by 40 to 50 per cent by 1998 in order to become more competitive now that offshore reserves are dwindling.

The Norwegian Petroleum Society said in a report that an estimated net 17 billion crowns (\$2.6 billion) would be saved in the next four years if the cost reductions in exploration, development and production are carried out as planned.

"If we succeed in complying with this plan, Norway can be an oil nation for many years to come," Energy Minister Jens Stoltenberg said on receiving the report.

"If we don't succeed, this is the beginning of the end," Norway struck oil in the North Sea in the 1970s and is now Europe's biggest oil producer, pumping about 2.8 million barrels per day. The output equals 16 per cent of gross domestic product.

Huge oilfields such as Statfjord have reached their peak and the Scandinavian state will this year probably become the world's second largest oil exporter after Saudi Arabia.

But output at the big platforms will decline in a few years, facing Norway with a challenge because new fields under development are much smaller and more difficult to exploit.

"We know we are facing a completely new era with funds constantly becoming smaller," Mr. Stoltenberg told reporters. "If we don't manage to do things better and cheaper, all we can do is to harvest the oil we have found and then pack and leave. If we do things better and cheaper we can develop new finds."

Norway also has huge natural gas finds but the report said attitudes had become more prudent after a period of great optimism about the growth in European

demand for natural gas.

Known as Norsok for its Norwegian acronym, the report was initiated in 1993 to improve efficiency on Norway's continental shelf amid tougher competition from the British North Sea sector and the U.S. continental shelf in the Gulf of Mexico.

The report outlined ways of streamlining cooperation between suppliers and operators, introducing common technical standards in place of company-specific solutions as well as slashing administration and red tape.

"We can realistically expect to achieve the Norsok goals of a 40-50 per cent reduction in lead time and costs (from the 1993 level) by the target date of 1998," it said.

The compiler of the report, Thorleif Enger of Norsk Hydro A/S, said the government's share of the savings would be 85 to 90 per cent

because of high marginal taxes and the government's economic involvement in the Norwegian oil industry.

Industry has already started cutting costs, but "if the industry's share of the savings were higher, the incentives to save would also be higher," he added.

Take Your Valentine To:

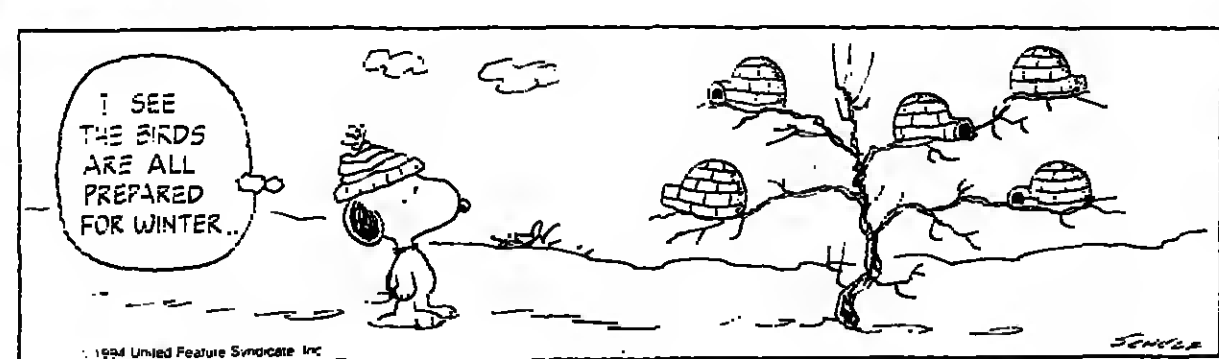
# Valentino

Restaurant

For Reservations, please call 645205

Opens Nightly

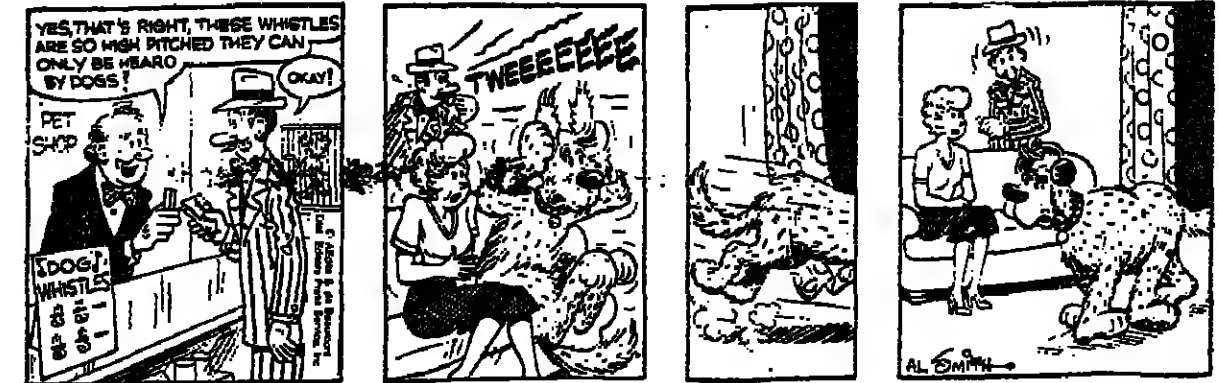
## Peanuts



## Andy Capp



## Mutt'n'Jeff



## THE BETTER HALF



## JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

TOBAN

DAMEF

SHULOC

LOBIED

What's the bottom line?

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

ANSWER: HE \_\_\_\_\_ ON \_\_\_\_\_

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: ALTAR FLUID MUSEUM WHEEZE

Answer: What the well-to-do candy maker enjoyed — THE SWEET LIFE

## THE Daily Crossword by Manny Miller

ACROSS

- Garment strip
- Stadium feature
- Blue-green
- Come (letter)
- Denier Shearer
- Daylight
- Bakery item
- Tor's boy
- West African unit
- West African country
- Liquid measures
- Deranged
- Long-handled hammer
- "Flinders"
- Poisonous compound
- Refrain syllable
- Headless delay
- Proverb
- Euphoric states
- Fix over
- Leah and Conny
- Horse yet to win
- Showing life
- Collected
- Dressed
- On land
- relief
- Consider
- Creek letter
- Singer Guthrie
- Ostentatious
- Showed over
- Graying voice
- Textile fiber

DOWN

- Singing insect
- Distant
- beginning
- "Tie-die"
- Seaman
- Prescription
- Strength
- a customer
- Glove
- Organic compound
- Dallas school letters
- Latin-American
- Part of a star
- step
- 12 "You Glad You're You?"
- Party nooses
- Press
- Starry dress ornament
- Bath powder
- Arm bone
- Miscellaneous ones
- Isben character
- Traffic sign
- Showered over
- Philippine ruler
- Guinness
- Imaginary line
- NCO
- In deadlock
- Traveller
- Shorty
- Flow, pret.
- Pat
- Best decisively
- Grocery store
- Philippine ruler
- Guinness
- Part of a star
- step
- 47 Find fault
- 48 Los Angeles caper
- 49 Newcastle
- 50 Author Fleming
- 51 Dik
- 52 Use a disk
- 53 Salsa dance
- 54 Ives
- 55 Pitar part
- 56 River of Hades
- 58 Author Fleming
- 59 Dik

Puzzle solved:

LIST SCAL THESE  
SEAL GONY HOMER  
TIGER MOTIV FELT  
TUBO END STUFF  
SEAL GONY HOMER  
TIGER MOTIV FELT  
TUBO END STUFF  
SEAL GONY HOMER  
TIGER MOTIV FELT  
TUBO END STUFF

Business

Daily Deal

A review economic news the Arabic press

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ab Bank employees a memorandum management demanding salaries benefits. The dier presented after management made in promises it made in consider some of demands in 1994. The ndum was signed by employees out of the staff employed by the Al Dstour.

According to sources at nery of Transport, a nery will be taken shorty and transportation fares d, or service cars. e will be the first wards revising fares on blic transportation throughout the Klag. Based on a special prepared by special- technical committees, nces expect that trans- fares in service cars raised by 10 to 30 fts rises within the Amman Fares on routes from in to the governments early cities will be in- by 30 to 50 fts. Ser- ab fares have not been ed since 1985 when ed slightly increased 31).

The general assembly of United Company for ising Land Transport old an ordinary meeting Feb. 26, 1995 to discuss company's operations for 1994. The balance sheet shows that the JD 5 million capital company had JD 1.4 million last year and JD 535,600 in 1994. As such, operating loss amounted to JD 208. The company is expected to distribute 10,000 in dividends, or 10 per cent (Al Aswaq).

According to statistics by the Ministry of In- and Trade a total of 10 companies with JD 21.4 million in capital were registered in the ministry in December 1994, compared to 10 companies with JD 28.4 million in capital in December 1993. The number of companies which were dissolved in 1994 was 70 compared to 70 in 1993. Investments in capital during the last quarter of 1994 totalled JD 10 (Al Aswaq).

The Cities and Villages, ment Bank made a billion profit last year. The bank extended million in loans to 80 pal councils and 36 vil- councils; 47 per cent of us were to open and roads, 10 per cent for rive projects and 24 nt for rescheduling in- ents and interests ere due. The rest of ans were spent on equipment, construct- tic buildings and com- people for approp- s of their land (Al

The Tourism Investment ment of the Social y Corporation plans to and modernise its and reshouses this a total cost of JD 4.5 . The department is nducting technical and studies to set up a spa in the Dead Sea (Al Ra'i).

he governor of the- nian Monetary Au- said that any move to Palestinian currency nture will be carried consultation and coop- with Jordan in the ace (Al Ra'i).

A Jordanian Business- ocation started pre- for a delegation to ain, France and De- between March 28 and . 1995, to enhance- ties with the busi- nesses in those s (Al Ra'i).



# Business & Finance

## Lull on Beirut foreign exchange market, dealers say

BEIRUT (R) — Dealers reported a continued lull on the Beirut foreign exchange market Monday and said the inflow of capital to Lebanon was slowing.

"There are still no fresh amounts coming in from outside to the market. There are many reasons, political and economic," said Talal Abou Zaki, foreign exchange manager at Bank of Beirut and the Arab Countries.

Newspapers also reported a slowdown on the market and in the movement of capital.

The Beirut French-language daily L'Orient-Le Jour said in its weekly market report that the political situation was making the market hesitant and uncertain despite rising local interest rates.

"All this translates into a contraction of activity following a net slowdown of capital movement towards Lebanon," the newspaper said.

But central bank officials told Reuters there are indications the flow of investment capital is still strong.

A \$30 million balance of payments surplus in December, despite a slowdown in the economy and a political crisis caused by Prime Minister Rafik al-Hariri's attempted resignation, showed that capital is still coming in, they said.

"The explanation (for the surplus) is that capital inflow for investment is still strong," a bank official said.

December balance of payments figures are the latest available. January figures will be ready near the end of this month.

## Business Daily Beat

A review of economic news from the Arabic press

## Arab Bank employees demand pay raise, more benefits

Arab Bank employees submitted a memorandum to the management demanding adjustments to their salaries and other benefits. The demands were presented after the management failed to honour promises it made in 1993 to consider some of these demands in 1994. The memorandum was signed by 1,600 employees out of the 1,900 staff employed by the bank (Al Dustour).

According to sources at the Ministry of Transport, a decision will be taken shortly to amend transportation fares in small cars, or service cars. The move will be the first step towards revising fares on all public transportation means throughout the Kingdom. Based on a special study, prepared by specialised technical committees, the sources expect that transportation fares to service cars will be raised by 10 to 30 per cent on routes within the Amman area. Fares on routes from Amman to the governorates and nearby cities will be increased by 30 to 50 per cent. Service car fares have not been amended since 1985 when they were slightly increased (Al Rai).

The general assembly of the United Fund for Organising Land Transport will hold an ordinary meeting on Feb. 26, 1995 to discuss the company's operations during 1994. The balance sheet shows that the JD 5 million capital company earned JD 535,000 last year and spent JD 535,000 on administrative and general expenses. As such, operating profit amounted to JD 535,000. The company is expected to distribute JD 500,000 in dividends, or 10 per cent (Al Aswaq).

According to statistics issued by the Ministry of Industry and Trade a total of 140 companies with a JD 21.4 million capital were registered at the ministry in December 1994, compared to 163 companies with JD 28.4 million capital in December 1993. The number of companies which were dissolved in December 1994 was 70 with a JD 582,000 in capital. Foreign investments by five companies during the last month of 1994 totalled JD 450,000 (Al Aswaq).

The Cities and Villages Development Bank made a JD3 million profit last year. In 1994, the bank extended JD7.6 million in loans to 80 municipal councils and 36 village councils; 47 per cent of the loans were to open and asphalt roads, 10 per cent for productive projects and 24 per cent for rescheduling instalments and interests that were due. The rest of the loans were spent on buying equipment, constructing public buildings and compensating people for appropriations of their land (Al Rai).

The Tourism Investment Department of the Social Security Corporation plans to expand and modernise its hotels and resorts this year for a total cost of JD 4.5 million. The department is also conducting technical and economic studies to set up a health spa in the Dead Sea area (Al Rai).

The governor of the Palestinian Monetary Authority said that any move to issue a Palestinian currency in the future will be carried out in consultation and cooperation with Jordan in the first place (Al Rai).

The Jordanian Businessmen Association started preparations for a delegation to visit Spain, France and Denmark between March 28 and April 8, 1995, to enhance business ties with those countries (Al Rai).

## Change of mindset most essential for technology-based development in Jordan

By P.V. Vivekanand  
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Sweeping changes in the "trade-oriented" attitude of the government and businesses are most essential if Jordan is to benefit from efficient use of technology to develop its economic base, a seminar on the Kingdom's economy heard Monday.

Lairh Al Qasem, general manager of Jordan Technology Group, also warned that unless Jordan moved quickly to adapt itself to the requirements of technology-oriented development then the Kingdom would end up as a mere source of skilled and unskilled labour.

Mr. Qasem lamented that the concept of research and development among Jordanian industries was far below the desired level and a majority of Jordanian businesses were reluctant to commit funds to developing own technologies.

Addressing the seminar, entitled "Jordan and the World" and organised by Economic Perspectives, a local newsletter, under the patronage of the Jordan Trade Association, Mr. Qasem cautioned, however, that technology transfer was not the panacea for Jordan's economic advancement.

Technology transfer, if adopted and applied in the proper manner, could help Jordanian businesses, but the approach has to be strategically designed with the objective of using technology to develop own potential rather than be content with the level of foreign knowhow, Mr. Qasem said.

Over the decades, the government and a large segment of the private sector have become "trade-oriented profits rather than technology-based development," he said. Both sides tend to overlook long-term benefits of research and development and favour short-term monetary gains while considering business expansion, he asserted.

Mr. Qasem also cited bureaucracy, shortcoming in the taxation structure, lack of incentives and customs clearance procedures as some of the key obstacles that disuade research and development among Jordanian industries.

Our people — in the government as well as the private sector — have been used to the trade-oriented mindset for the past 50 years," he said. "This has to change. If it does not change Jordan will end up like some of the Asian countries which send their unskilled and skilled labour outside, with little to show in terms of local technology base."

Mr. Qasem argued that the flow of Arab assistance to Jordan in the 70s and 80s had largely "disassociated the government" from the local economy and a disuading factor against focusing on technology development on the local level. This mentality largely explains not only the lack of government encouragement or incentives for local research but also the bureaucratic and procedural problems that a potential researcher faces.

The situation is slowly changing but it is taking its own time. The process of change is not of a level that is required at this stage when Jordan stands in need of innovative approaches and strategies.

The basic principle while studying any aspect of technology transfer, Mr. Qasem told the gathering, should be the realisation and appreciation of the fact that "raw materials are a depletable resource while technology is not."

He noted that the United States, one of the world leaders in industry today, started off with importing products and developing the products with research and technology derived from "reverse process technology" — starting with the product and going back to its production technology and origins.

Mr. Qasem cited Egypt as an example on the other end. The country has been producing the same type and style of Fiat cars for the past 30 years and has not introduced any technological improvement of its own in the vehicle. As a result, Egyptian-made Fiat cars "are useless as an export item," he noted.

In the case of Jordan, Mr. Qasem noted that most of the Kingdom's industries are producing consumer products under licensing agreements with foreign companies so that they have a cost advantage, but are doing little to introduce their own improved products based on own technology.

Mr. Qasem agreed that public sector entities like the Royal Scientific Society and the Higher Council for Science and Technology could help local industries in research and development. But, he said, the level of technology and research facilities available with these bodies has yet to be determined.

Turning to Israel, he said the country spent billions of dollars in research and development and benefited from it. Developing the Lavi fighter was an example, he said. Israel spent about \$1.3 billion on the project, which never took off, but it managed to sell up to 53 billion worth of electronic and related products which used technology derived while developing the fighter jet itself.

"Our focus is wrong," he said. "The import-oriented mindset — which gives you no reason to consider technology-based development — should change. Import trade makes short term gains, but the gains from development based on technology in the long term are much higher."

## London cocoa prices rise on squeeze fears

LONDON (R) — Fears that there might be a shortage of good-quality physical cocoa in March pushed prices higher Monday, traders said.

The March cocoa futures contract rose some £14 (\$21.89) on the London Commodity Exchange to £1,020 (\$1,595) a tonne.

This meant that the March contract was now at a £4 (\$6.26) premium over the benchmark May futures contract from around parity to a premium of £1 (\$1.56) in recent weeks.

Some traders said they suspected a U.S. trade house was buying March contracts aggressively in order to test sentiment.

March has been buoyant since the expiry of the December contract which traded as much as £65 (\$101.7) over the next month because of a lack of tenderable cocoa to meet long futures contracts.

Since then traders have feared that a similar situation might develop when the March contract expires.

# Financial Markets

**Jordan Times**  
in co-operation with  
**Cairo Amman Bank**

**U.S. Dollar in International Markets**

Currency	New York Close Date 10/2/95	Tel Aviv Date 10/2/95
Sterling Pound*	1.5635	1.5640**
Deutsche Mark	1.5190	1.5185**
Swiss Franc	1.2885	1.2815**
French Franc	5.2585	5.2600**
Japanese Yen	98.90	98.78***
European Currency Unit	1.8420	1.8407**

\* Last for ECU

Forward Interest Rates			
Date: 13/2/1995			
Currency	1 MTH	3 MTH	6 MTH
U.S. Dollar	5.81	6.06	6.37
sterling pound	6.37	6.56	6.81
Deutsche Mark	4.78	4.81	5.00
Swiss Franc	8.45	3.48	3.93
French Franc	5.35	5.56	5.87
Japanese Yen	2.12	2.17	2.18
European Currency Unit	5.68	5.86	6.19

Precious Metals			
Date: 13/2/1995			
Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm	Metal
Gold	374.10	7.55	Silver
			4.26

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin			
Date: 13/2/1995			
Currency	Bid	Offer	
U.S. Dollar	0.7000	0.7010	
sterling pound	1.0927	1.0982	
Deutsche Mark	0.4604	0.4627	
Swiss Franc	0.5458	0.5488	
French Franc	0.1330	0.1337	
Japanese Yen	0.7071	0.7106	
Dutch Guilder	0.4107	0.4128	
Swedish Krona	0.0434	0.0436	
Italian Lira	0.0434	0.0436	
Belgian Franc	0.0434	0.0436	

Other Currencies			
Date: 13/2/1995			
Currency	Bid	Offer	
Bahraini Dinar	1.1410	1.1400	
Lebanese Lira	0.041965	0.042615	
Saudi Riyal	0.1860	0.1875	
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.3200	2.3650	
Qatari Riyal	0.1911	0.1930	
Egyptian Pound	0.2000	0.2130	
Omani Riyal	1.8070	1.8200	
UAE Dirham	0.1980	0.1970	
Greek Drachma	0.2725	0.3250	
Cypriot Pound	1.4145	1.5150	

## LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London Foreign Exchange and bullion markets Monday.			
U.S. \$1.00 costs	1.4022/32	Canadian dollar	1.5178/88
	1.7022/32	Deutsche marks	1.7022/32
	1.2806/16	Swiss francs	31.24/28
	5.2575/25	Belgian francs	1612.63/6
	98.62/72	French francs	7.3975/75
	6.6460/10	Italian lire	6.6460/10
	6.9794/44	Japanese yen	156.34/44
One sterling	\$1.5634/44	Swedish crowns	1375.60/375.50
One ounce of gold	\$375.60/375.50	Norwegian crowns	
		Danish crowns	

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ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR MARCH			
COMPANY'S NAME	NO. OF SHARES TRADED	12/2/1995	13/2/1995
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	1,500	4,250	4,300
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK / NEW	428	2,877	4,220
BANK OF JORDAN	250	888	3,580
THE HOUSING BANK	1,222	7,222	6,050
JORDAN KRAFT BANK	250	2,577	3,300
JORDAN CULP BANK	2,250	3,278	1,450
JORDAN ISLAMIC BANK	1,177	4,444	3,780
JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK	850	625	4,080
SEIT KHALIL SAVINGS/INVESTMENT FOR HOUSING	150	1,565	3,120
AMMAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT	14,335	19,125	1,320
ARAB BANKING CORPORATION/JORDAN	500	1,500	4,000
PHILADELPHIA INVESTMENT BANK	150	2,718	1,450
BANKS SECTOR		25,027	91,444
GENERAL ARABIA INSURANCE		654	1,174
JORDAN FRENCH INSURANCE		1,593	3,553
INSURANCE SECTOR		1,624	5,227
JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER		10,955	1,671
JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER / NEW		1,270	1,837
ARAB INTERNATIONAL HOTELS		750	3,650
JORDAN PETROLEUM REFINERY		2,150	9,450
NATIONAL PORTFOLIO SECURITIES		250	550
UNITEE MIDDLE EAST & COMMODITY HOTELS		250	722
ARAB INTER. FOR INVESTMENT & EDUCATION		2425	8,923
SERVICES SECTOR		15,475	14,548
JORDAN TOBACCO & CIGARETTES		30	1,535
THE JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES		9,169	2,729
THE ARAB POTASH/NEW		200	1,216
JORDAN NATIONAL SHIPPING LINES		1,150	2,140
JORDAN WORTHERS MILLS		4,020	3,240
ARAB PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURING		2,683	1,375
SPINNING & WEAVING		405	2,850
RAPA INDUSTRIES		3,600	1,015
OAR AL OAMA DEVELOPMENT & INVESTMENT		3,150	2,507
ARAB INVESTMENT & INTERNATIONAL TRADE		3,920	3,435
ARAB ALUMINUM INDUSTRIES		1,500	775
LIVESTOCK & POULTRY		1,980	1,563
JORDAN PAPER CONVERTING & TRADING		3,300	4,571
INTERMEDIATE PETRO-CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES		250	618
JORDAN ROCKETRY INDUSTRIES		1,000	1,450
JORDAN INDUSTRIES & MACHINERY		350	273
NATIONAL CABLE & WIRE MANUFACTURING		3,500	2,693
JORDAN SUEZ-CEMENTALS		350	985
ARAB CENTER FOR PAPER & CHEMICALS		1,300	2,470
UNIVERSAL MODERN INDUSTRIES		4,250	1,781
JORDAN INDUSTRIAL RESOURCES CO.		1,875	3,977
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR		108,661	357,280
GRAND TOTAL		200,997	599,379
NO. OF TRADED SHARES IN PARALLEL MARKET			170,931
VALUE TRADED IN PARALLEL MARKET			26,268

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# Romario flops in Flamengo debut

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP) — The fanfare was there. What was missing was a goal.

World Cup hero Romario finally debuted Sunday in an official Rio league game for Flamengo before an estimated crowd of more than 99,000 screaming fans at fabled Maracana Stadium.

But the 1994 FIFA Player of the Year failed to score as Flamengo and arch-rival Fluminense battled to a 0-0 draw.

"I didn't get my goal yet," Romario said. "But what's important is that the stadium was full and the game was a cliff-hanger. Fans got their money's worth."

Fluminense, despite playing without injured star Renato Gauchio, was the faster, more offensive team, and came closest to scoring when Lyra's free kick bounced off the crossbar shortly before halftime.

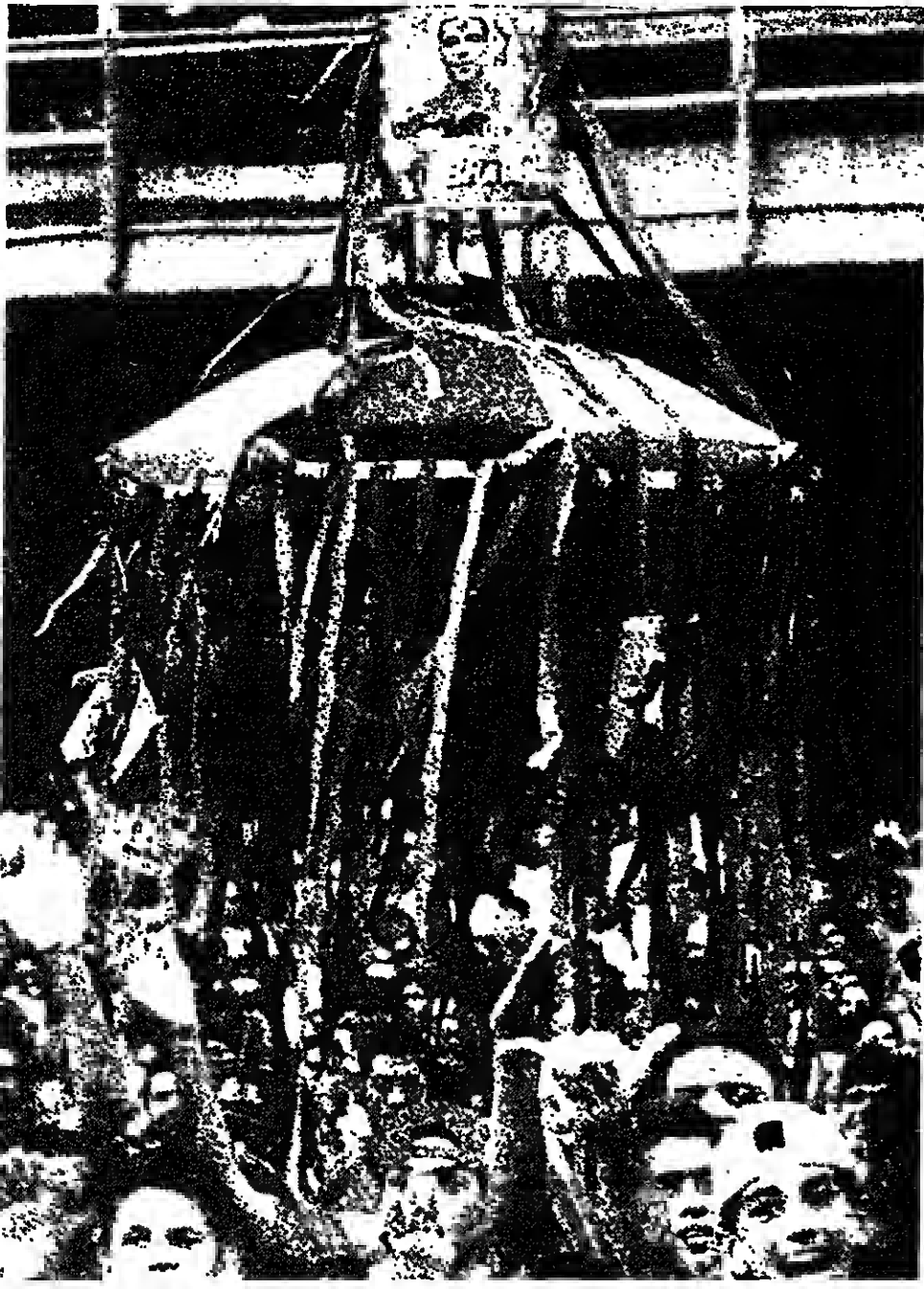
Flamengo played better in the second half but had difficulty getting the ball to Romario.

For Romario, it was a melodramatic climax to a controversial week.

In different incidents, Romario was accused of attacking a photographer outside a hotel, a woman inside a restaurant, and a 10-year-old beach peanut vendor. His imported car was rammed outside a Copacabana beach hotel.

A Barcelona woman threatened to name him in a paternity suit, and Monica Santoro, his wife and mother of his 12 children, filed for divorce, freezing his bank accounts.

Three weeks ago, Romario said he needed time to recover from the stress of Brazil's World Cup championship and his \$4.5 million transfer from Spain's Barcelona.



Fans of Brazilian soccer player Romario cheer on Sunday as Romario played his first official game for his new club Flamengo in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (AFP photo)

# Kiptanui smashes world record

GHEENT, Belgium (R) — Kenyan Moses Kiptanui scored to a world 3,000 metres indoor record Sunday — and then said he planned to break it again before attacking three outdoor records later this year.

Kiptanui clocked seven minutes 35.15 seconds, beating by 2.16 seconds his own old record, set in Seville in February 1992.

"I didn't expect to run as fast as this. It's only my second race (of the season) and I thought it would be too early. It came as a surprise," said Kiptanui.

"I've been mainly training on endurance... cross-country (races) only."

But Sunday's record had made the rest of the year look very promising.

The Kenyan plans attacks on the 3,000 and 5,000 metres outdoor marks and will also try to break the eight minutes barrier in the 3,000 metres steeplechase, a record he himself holds at 8:02.08.

But his next goal is to shave his 3,000 world indoor mark again.

In the women's 60 metres, world record holder Inna Privalova clocked 6.97 seconds — 0.05 outside her world record.

Russian Privalova, the world 200 metres indoor champion and European 100 and 200 metres title holder, was pushed to the line by Jamaican Merlene Ottey, who finished 0.08 seconds behind in second place.

# Graf must live with pain

## Maleeva, Becker, Ferreira win titles

PARIS (Agencies) — Steffi Graf, who has not played for 12 weeks, plays her first match at the Paris Open this week knowing she is carrying an injury that is likely to stay with her for the rest of her career.

"This is something I just have to live with," she said of the bone spur growth in her lower back which forced her to miss last month's Australian Open.

"I've seen lots of specialists and the only real answer is to have an operation," she added. "But that would mean being out of tennis for six to eight months and even then it wouldn't be 100 per cent sure of success."

Graf, whose last match in November ended in defeat at the Virginia Slims Championships when she was beaten in straight-sets by world number-three Mary Pierce in the quarter-finals, said she had no immediate intention of changing her scheduled for the rest of the year.

"I shall take it one tournament at a time," said the German.

Asked to comment on Ivan Lendl's retirement from tennis at the start of the season because of severe back pain and a warning from doctors that he risked permanent injury if he played on, Graf said that her own case was different.

"My back is as bad as it can get. I have got myself into the best shape possible and I cannot damage it any more by playing."

Spain's Arantxa Sanchez, beaten by Pierce in the Australian Open final in January, has taken over the number-one world ranking in Graf's absence.

"I can't expect to be world number-one without playing tournaments — and I've only played one tournament in five months," said Graf.

"I was in Florida until mid-January and since then I've been in Germany. I've been trying to get fit," she explained.

Graf, who is seeded to play Pierce in the final and who is scheduled to open her campaign in the French capital on Wednesday, was dealt no favours at the 32-player draw at the Coubertin Stadium on Monday.

In her first match she will play either Larissa Neiland of the Ukraine or Russian Elena Makarova and she could then find herself up against either the experienced Katerina Maleeva of Bulgaria or Swiss teenage prodigy Martina Hingis.

Jana Novotna, the 1993 Wimbledon finalist, is also in



Bulgaria's Magdalena Maleeva returns a volley during Ameritech Cup (AFP photo)

Referring to Mary Pierce's Australian Open victory, Graf said: "I didn't see any of the matches in Australia — I just saw the results. But she must have played an incredible tournament. She's certainly made a perfect start to the year."

Maleeva wins Chicago final

Third-seed Magdalena Maleeva, a last-minute entry, defeated Lisa Raymond 7-5, 7-6 (7-2) Sunday to win the \$430,000 Ameritech Cup.

The \$79,000 first prize made the Bulgarian the 62nd woman professional tennis player to earn \$1 million in a career.

Raymond, who beat three seeded players to reach the final, picked up her biggest paycheck ever, and will move up to a career-high 34th in the rankings.

Maggie's tough...

Raymond said: "She obviously came into the match with a lot of confidence after beating Gaby (Bagrieta Sabatini) yesterday (in the semifinals). I just didn't have it in me today."

This was the third time in her last five events that Maleeva, 19, has reached the final. However, it was her first tour win since Zurich last fall.

Maleeva totalled eight aces, compared to two by Raymond, but won only four points of 16 (25 per cent) at the net as she relied on her passing game.

It was only the second time Raymond, who turned professional in May 1993, has reached a final. She lost to Lindsay Davenport in the 1994 Lucerne tournament. In that event, Raymond beat two seeded players to advance.

# Blair sets new world record

CALGARY (AFP) — American world champion speed skater Bonnie Blair set a new world record for 500m here Sunday, defeating her closest rival in the fastest women's race of all time.

Canadian Susan Auch, who beat Blair in their last two meetings — Saturday in Calgary and less than two weeks ago in Innsbruck — also lost Blair's old world best of 38.99secs.

But the record stays with the American who clocked 38.88secs in a head-to-head race with Auch who was timed at 38.94.

They are the only two women ever to have broken the 39sec barrier.

Sunday's double break of the record Blair set here last year, 38.99 secs, was thanks largely to the fact that the two world leaders were paired against each other.

Blair admitted after the race: "Being paired with Susan was a big help to me. The ice felt good and it seemed like it gave back to me as well."

Auch was far from disappointed at failing to get a straight win over the world champion.

"I expected her to come back," said Auch, who beat Blair in another World Cup 500m race Saturday with a short-lived Canadian record of 39.15secs.

"She brought out the best in me. I was pretty stressed about the race, but I skate a lot better when I'm pressured."

Blair's previous world record was set at the same rink here in Calgary last year.

# Baseball strike passes half-year mark

WASHINGTON (AFP) — The baseball strike entered its seventh month on Sunday with owners and players still locked in bitter opposition.

Even the personal intervention of President Bill Clinton, and the efforts of renowned labour mediator William Uery, failed to produce any progress, leaving fans and the millions of people whose livelihoods depend on the game dangling as the scheduled start of the 1995 season approaches.

After both parties failed to reach a compromise in meetings at the White House on Tuesday, Clinton proposed legislation that would force them to submit to binding arbitration.

Republican congressional

# Olympics spirit returns to Lillehammer

LILLEHAMMER (AP) — All that was missing this weekend were the Olympic athletes. But even a few of them turned up.

One year after the Winter Olympics opened in Lillehammer on Feb. 12, 1994, the small town Norway town was once again decked out in its Olympic finery and filled at times with happy hordes out to recapture the spirit of the games.

"It's wonderful to see the town full of life in the streets. It's real Olympic spirit," Trond Anderson, 49, said Sunday. He made the 180-kilometre trek from Oslo so he could trade Olympic pins, as he did last year.

The Olympic banners were back and Olympic music blared along snow-covered Storgaten, Lillehammer's long pedestrian street.

Olympic-style torches burned outside the 19th century wooden buildings and up at the Lillehammer Olympic park in the hills above town.

Hundreds of people — volunteer workers at the games — donned their official Olympic pins and snow-pants for the weekend. Olympic pin traders set up their stands again, and folk dancers were taking a turn in the streets.

Despite all the celebrating, some say it's time for Norway to come to grips with the passing of its Olympics, a national obsession in this winter-sports crazy country of 4.3 million people.

"The party is over," said Tove Lehre, a left-wing member of Lillehammer's City Council. "I think it's fine to have this one-year-after celebration, but I am scared to death that Lillehammer is going to become an Olympic cliché if we celebrate year after year."

Gerhard Heiberg, the former president of the Lillehammer Olympic organising committee disagreed. "I think we should have a big party every February 12

# Doubts remain

PARIS (AFP) — Italian football resumed Sunday with a 3-0 for fans to unite against the end of a Gennaro supporter's strike in France. Teams cheered a one minute's silence to mark the death of a reporter shot dead after an earlier match in the Paris suburbs the previous weekend.

Also, it was not always clear that the anti-violence messages were getting through.

In France, where all amateur matches in the Paris area were called off, the one minute's silence at professional games was often ignored. At Metz it was turned into a shouting contest over local fans responded to a reporter shot dead after an earlier match in the Paris suburbs the previous weekend.

There was plenty of violence on the pitch as well. A lower division game between Enlhouse and Ajaccio had to be stopped for a quarter-of-an-hour after all 22 players, despite wearing black armbands in memory of Dr. Alou who was killed leaving the Drancy stadium to the north of the capital, indulged in a free-for-all.

Four players were sent off. In Italy, where all sport was suspended the previous day because of the stabbing of Vincenzo Spagnolo by the AC Milan versus Verona clash, fans across the country appeared subdued and many stayed away as team captains addressed an anti-violence message to the crowd.

Luciano fans waved anti-violence banners as their side beat Bari 2-0 to stay on top of the table.

Alexandro Del Piero, the under-21 international, scored from the penalty spot in the 40th minute after a Brazilian Gerson scored beyond doubt with a goal in the final minute.

Both sides finished with men after Robert Jarni of Juventus and Bari's defender Mangano were sent off.

"Juve," who have 42 points from 19 games, retain their three-point lead over Inter Milan after beating the Roma 3-1. Argentina's all-time Roma's goalscorer, a free-kick, then came in before completing a hat-trick in the 71st minute.

Another Argentina striker, Gabriel Batistuta, took his

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NORTH  
♠ A J 8 4  
♥ 7 5 3 2  
♦ A J  
♣ 7 6 4

EAST  
♠ 7 5  
♥ 9 4  
♦ Q 7 6 5  
♣ 10 5 3 2

SOUTH  
♠ Q 10 3 2  
♥ 8 6  
♦ K 9 2  
♣ A Q 8

The bidding:  
South 1 ♠ North 1 ♠ East 1 ♠  
South 2 ♠ North 2 ♠ East 2 ♠  
South 3 ♠ North 3 ♠ East 3 ♠

Opening lead: King of ♣.

Here's another chance for you to display your declarer technique. Assume you have reached four spades on the auction shown and West attacks with three rounds of hearts. How do you proceed?

Your problem is to avoid losing two club tricks. One way would be to take a club finesse, but since West tries to have the king, that line should be rejected. Better is the diamond finesse. Although ostensibly only a 50 percent chance, West's takeout double improves the chances of the finesse succeeding. As the cards lie, however, the queen of diamonds is outside, so again the contract fails.

Other options involve an endplay. You might try ruffing the third round, drawing trumps in two rounds, cashing the ace of diamonds and then ruffing the last heart. Now cash the king of diamonds and ruff a diamond, then lead a club to the right. West can win, but is trapped in the endplay. Unfortunately, East can fail this plan by inserting the ten of clubs, allowing West to overtake the queen with the king and return the jack.

A slightly different endplay guarantees the contract because West is marked with four hearts on the auction. Ruff the third heart, draw trumps, then cash the ace and king of diamonds and ruff a diamond. Now lead the table's last heart and discard a club from hand.

West can win, but must then return a club into your major tenace or else lead a diamond, allowing you to ruff on the board while discarding the queen of clubs. Either way, the rest of the tricks are yours.

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<b>The Immigrant</b>		<b>FREEFALL</b>		<b>SPEED</b>		Composed and directed by Mohammad Al Shawagfeh		<b>AL SALAM YA SALAM</b>	
Shows: 12:30, 3:00, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30		Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 8:30, 10:30		Shows: 12:30, 8:15		Daily from 8:30 p.m.		at 8:30 p.m.	
		The movie: THE LION KING will be shown on Fridays and Thursdays at 10:30 a.m. & 12:30 p.m.		<b>CONCORD '2' ROBOCOP "3"</b>		Children's Play		For reservation, please call 625155	
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						Daily at 10:30 p.m.			



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## Blair sets new world record

CALGARY (AFP) — American world champion speed skater Bonnie Blair set a new world record for 500m here Sunday, defeating her closest rival in the fastest women's race of all time.

Canadian Susan Auch, who beat Blair in their last two meetings — Saturday in Calgary and less than two weeks ago in Innsbruck — also beat Blair's old world best of 38.99secs.

But the record stays with the American who clocked 38.69secs in a head-to-head race with Auch who was timed at 38.94.

They are the only two women ever to have broken the 39sec barrier.

Sunday's double break of the record Blair set here last year, 38.99 secs, was thanks largely to the fact that the two world leaders were paired against each other.

Blair admitted after the race: "Being paired with Susan was a big help to me. The ice felt good and it seemed like it gave back to me as well."

Auch was far from disappointed at failing to get a third straight win over the world champion.

"I expected her to come back," said Auch, who beat Blair in another World Cup 500m race Saturday with a short-lived Canadian record of 39.15secs.

"She brought out the best in me. I was pretty stressed about the race, but I skate a lot better when I'm pressured."

Blair's previous world record was set at the same rink here in Calgary last year.



Swedish Kenneth Eriksson puts his Subaru through snowy landscape during the Swedish Rally (AFP photo)

## Gentleman Makinen gifts Swedish Rally title to Eriksson

KARLSTAD, Sweden (AFP) — Local boy Kenneth Eriksson was gifted the Swedish Rally title here on Sunday by 'gentleman' teammate Tommi Makinen.

Makinen, leading by 43secs going into the final special stage, suddenly pulled over his Mitsubishi Lancer with just 500m to go from the finish, allowing Eriksson to storm past to victory.

It was later revealed the two had made a gentlemen's agreement that whoever was leading on Saturday should be allowed to win the entire event.

That honour fell to the 39-year-old Eriksson, who then had to drive first over the snow-covered course on Sunday morning, costing him precious time.

Finn Makinen, however, kept his word, allowing Eriksson to win by 12 seconds and finish with a time of 4h51:27. Thomas Radstrom of Sweden, in a Toyota Celta, came third, 1min. 7sec. behind the winner.

Makinen had the consolation of taking the lead in the World Championship standings after two events, with 25 points to compatriot Juha Kankkunen's 22 in his Toyota. Carlos Sainz of Spain is level with Eriksson in third on 20.

Eriksson and Makinen, helped by their local expertise of driving on snow, dominated the event from the start.

The next World Cup event takes place in Portugal between 8-10 March.

Eriksson said: "Obviously I'm happy with my victory but I'm sorry that it had to end like that. I would have preferred to fight it out to the end with Tommi."

"I understand the importance for Mitsubishi to get two cars to the finish in the first two places without damaging them."

Makinen said: "I stopped at 500 metres from the end not because I was angry but simply because I cannot drive slowly in the special stages. I'd be frightened to lose concentration."

"I'm paid by Mitsubishi and if I'm asked to sacrifice first place, then it's because it was necessary for the firm."

Andy Cowan, the team's sporting director, explained: "I took the decision on Sunday morning, seeing the bad weather conditions, that Eriksson, who was leading, should win."

"I told them over breakfast and I think it was a logical decision. Since we got a one-two, our Japanese directors may give us the green light to run two cars in the Portuguese Rally."

## Chinese swimmers excluded from Pan Pacific Championships

HONOLULU (Agencies) — China became the first country to be excluded from a major sporting event for drug use when the Pan Pacific Swimming Association decided here to bar them from this year's championships.

"We're tired of competing against Chinese who are cheating," Harold Cliff, director of Swimming Canada, said Sunday.

Australia and Canada backed the United States resolution but Japan voted against the ban.

Seven Chinese swimmers, including world champions Yang Aihua and Lu Bin, tested positive for DHT, dehydrothermalization, at the Asian Games in Hiroshima last October.

China's 12 out of 16 women gold medals and five world records at last year's world championships in Rome sparked off allegations of East German-type drug use but the Chinese authorities have repeatedly denied there is any systematic drug-taking.

The PPSA said the suspension would enable the Chinese to clean up the sport under the guidance of the International Swimming Federation (FINA) to be able to compete at the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta. The Georgian city is also hosting the Pan-Pacific Championships in August.

The ban might be good news for the World Student Games' organisers in Fukuoka as the Chinese might now send their top team to Japan. The two events clash and it had been assumed China would send their best swimmers to Atlanta.

FINA announced last week it would investigate what part trainers, doctors, and officials played in the doping scandal involving Chinese swimmers at last year's Asian Games.

A special commission is to be sent to China to carry out the probe.

"FINA is taking a positive, progressive approach to the problem rather than a punitive one. It's saying, what can we do to tighten the rules and make the sport a clean one?" U.S. Swimming Federation president Carol Zaleski said.

FINA also revealed it would be stepping up out-of-competition drug testing this year and plans to put forward several rule changes involving doping at a special congress to be held in Rio de Janeiro at the end of the year.

Amongst the proposals, FINA wants to take action against the federations of swimmers found guilty and to have all swimmers who set a world record to be tested within 48 hours of setting the record.

"We hope to eliminate drugs from the sport," FINA president Mustapha Larfaoui said.

**China denounces decision**

Beijing Monday denounced a decision by organisers not to invite China to the 1995 Pan Pacific Championships as unbelievable, unfair and unjust.

"I don't quite believe this kind of decision would be made. What reason do they have to do this?" Guo Qinglong, secretary general of the Chinese Swimming Association, said in a telephone interview.

"It's unfair. It's against conventional reasoning... it's unjust," Guo said. "Only those who violate rules should be punished. There is no basis for punishing 1.2 billion people."

The answer was provided by United States Swimming President Carol Zaleski who said that allowing Chinese swimmers to participate would be "ignoring the wealth of actual and circumstantial evidence that points to the fact their drug problem is widespread and systematic."

"It is a fact that the use of banned drugs has entered China, like flies coming through windows... but our attitude toward drug abuse is unwavering. We will never tolerate, yield to it," Guo said.

"We're not having this problem just today. It began in the 1960s and the struggle against drug abuse is a long-term and complicated one," he said.

Four other Chinese athletes — two canoeists, a hurdler and a cyclist — were also banned last December after their urine samples showed traces of DHT, or dehydrothermalization, a performance-enhancing hormone banned by the International Olympic Committee.

In a related development, the China Sports Daily said on Monday tests conducted on 57 athletes who took part in its National Winter Games in Northeastern Jilin last month were all negative.

## Doubts remain as soccer returns from mourning

PARIS (AFP) — Italian football resumed Sunday with a call for fans to unite against violence two weeks after the killing of a Genoa supporter, while in France teams observed a one minute's silence to mark the death of a supporter shot dead after an amateur match in the Paris suburbs the previous weekend.

Alas, it was not always clear that the anti-violence messages were getting through.

In France, where all amateur matches in the Paris area were called off, the one minute's silence at professional games was often spoiled. At Metz it was turned into a shouting contest when local fans responded to drawn out partisan chanting by Paris St. Germain supporters, and at Lyon a section of the crowd used the moment to yell racist slogans.

There was plenty of violence on the pitch as well.

A lower division game between Endoume and Ajaccio had to be stopped for a quarter-of-an-hour after all 22 players, despite wearing black armbands in memory of Douadi Atou who was fatally shot leaving the Drancy stadium to the north of the capital, indulged in a free-for-all.

Four players were sent off. In Italy, where all sport was suspended the previous Sunday because of the stabbing of Vincenzo Spagnolo before the AC Milan versus Genoa clash, fans across the country appeared subdued and many stayed away as team captains addressed an anti-violence message to crowds.

Juventus fans waved anti-hooligan banners as their side beat Bari 2-0 to stay on top of the table.

Alessandro Del Piero, the under-21 international, scored from the penalty spot in the 40th minute after a handball by Brazilian Gerson and Ciro Ferrara put the issue beyond doubt with a goal in the final minute.

Both sides finished with ten men after Robert Jarni for Juventus and Bari's Amendop Mangone were sent off.

"Juve," who have 42 points from 19 games, retain their three-point lead over Parma, who beat Padova 1-0. Gianfranco Zola scored in the 71st minute after Parma struggled hard to unlock the worst defence in the league which has now let through 41 goals in 19 games.

AS Roma moved into third place on 34 points after beating Inter Milan 3-1. Argentina's international Abel Balbo got all the goals, scoring four in the 40th minute, then cancelling out Andrea Seno's qualifier before completing his hat-trick in the 71st minute.

Another Argentina striker, Gabriel Batistuta, took his



Arsenal's Paul Merson (left) comes up against a Leicester City player. The match ended 1-1 (AFP photo)

jured Nadal and Koeman, looking increasingly fragile. Merino made it 3-0. Two more goals, both scored by Radchenko and the second from the penalty spot, completed Barcelona's misery.

Johan Cruyff later admitted that he was "ashamed" of his side's performance and promised that some "unpopular" decisions would have to be taken.

"We had a lot of chances in the first-half and we didn't score from them," he said, adding: "Any team can make you suffer when you play like that — especially if you have two players sent off."

Cruyff, who said that the Spanish League was getting "more and more competitive" did not think buying new players was the answer.

"A lot of players are just not doing their bit, and they have already been warned," he said.

Real Madrid notched up their 14th win from 21 matches with a 4-1 away win at Logrones — Laudrup scoring twice with their other goals coming from Zamorano and Luis Enrique.

Deportivo stayed to second place five points behind Real despite a shock 3-1 defeat at struggling Sporting Gijon who moved up to third from bottom.

Ajax thrash Feyenoord to stay top

Despite missing seven key players through injury and suspension, Ajax Amsterdam extended their lead in the Dutch first division to five points with a convincing 4-1 victory over Feyenoord Rotterdam Sunday.

The big clash produced skirmishes between rival fans before the game. One policeman was taken to hospital and four others were slightly injured. Police reported a number of arrests.

On the field, the Dutch champions recovered from 1-0 down midway into the first half to equalise by halftime. Opening the second half with three quick goals, they put the game beyond Feyenoord's reach to maintain their unbeaten record.

The Amsterdam side outclassed their traditional rivals with neat possession football.

season's tally to 17 with two goals in Fiorentina's 3-1 win over Genoa, a victory which lifts the Florence side into sixth place.

AC Milan, fresh from their midweek Super Cup triumph over Arsenal, were held to a 1-1 draw at home to lowly Cagliari.

Lazio, beaten in their last outing by Bari, lost again and tumbled from third to fifth in the table — 11 points behind the leaders.

Without their suspended striker Roberto Rambaudi, they were beaten 2-0 by Torino for whom Ghanaian Abede Pele and French international Jocelyn Angloma scored in the 32nd and 74th minute respectively.

Paris St. Germain's hopes of retaining the French title were badly dented when they crashed 2-0 at Metz. The defeat left them trailing unbeaten pacemakers Nantes, who have a game in hand, by eight points.

The leaders were unable to face visiting Martiques because of a waterlogged pitch while Lyon moved up into second spot after scoring a 3-1 home win over Lille.

Paris St. Germain failed to turn first-half territorial domination into goals and paid the price when Cyrille Pouget was on target for the home side on the hour. Sylvain Kastendeuch then sealed the result with a penalty in the 77th minute after Bernard Lama needlessly brought down Pouget.

A hat-trick by Florian Maurice highlighted Lyon's win over Lille — the visitors scoring a consolation goal in the dying seconds through Eric Assadourian.

In Spain, Barcelona's nightmare continued and they crashed again to go six

## West wins All-Star game 139-112

PHOENIX (R) — Sacramento Kings guard Mitch Richmond scored 10 of his 23 points in the third quarter as the substitutes sparked the West's 139-112 victory over the East in the 45th annual NBA All-Star game Sunday.

Richmond used his outside shooting to trigger bursts in the second and third periods, when the West outscored the East by 20 points and took control of the game.

Richmond was named Most Valuable Player. He is the first player from the Franchise to receive the award since Oscar Robertson of the Cincinnati Royals in 1969.

Utah Jazz forward Karl Malone and Phoenix Suns forward Charles Barkley scored 15 points each and Seattle SuperSonics guard Gary Payton had 15 assists for the West, which has won three of the last four mid-season meetings.

Orlando Magic centre Shaquille O'Neal scored 22 points for the east, which still holds a 28-17 edge in the All-Time series.

The West expanded a 16-point halftime lead to 79-60 early in the second half before going cold, missing 10 straight shots during one stretch.

The East used an 11-0 run, capped by a three-point play by O'Neal, to cut the deficit to 79-71 with 5:57 left in the third quarter. O'Neal pulled down a rebound, dribbled the length of the court and flipped in a finger roll as he drew the foul.

But Payton made a scoop shot and Richmond hit a three-pointer to rebuild the lead to 84-71 and West closed the period with an 11-0 flurry of its own.

Utah Jazz guard John Stockton hit a three-pointer, San Antonio Spurs centre David Robinson had a tip-in, Richmond sank a three-pointer and Stockton hit again from long range to give the West a 104-81 lead entering the fourth quarter.

**Barkley shows king-sized emotions**

Charles Barkley, who plays bigger-than-life, showed some king-sized emotions after the All-Star game.

First, the 6-foot-5 (1.96 metres) power forward blasted the ESPN sports television network for airing a comment about whites that he said was in jest. A few minutes later, he had a hard time disguising the nostalgia when he talked about the inevitable end of his spectacular, 11-year career.

"I think I've played well this season," he said Sunday night. "My goals for the season were to average 20 (points) and 10 (rebounds)." The newspaper said it had learned the NBA and 35 referees had hired defence lawyers to represent them in the matter.

**IRS investigate NBA referees**

At least 35 National Basketball Association referees are under investigation for allegedly evading taxes on income from the sales of unused airline tickets, a Portland newspaper reported on Sunday.

The Oregonian newspaper said it had learned from several sources that the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) had launched an investigation of the referees' travel expenses and the possibility that millions of dollars in income went unreported.

The newspaper said it had learned the NBA and 35 referees had hired defence lawyers to represent them in the matter.

### SPORTS IN BRIEF

#### Fogdoo career probably over

STOCKHOLM (R) — Tomas Fogdoo's career as a top skier is probably over following a training accident that left him partially paralysed, the Swedish news agency TT quoted his doctor as saying on Monday.

Olle Andren, head doctor at the University Hospital of Umea, in northern Sweden, said Fogdoo could recover some use of his legs but would have to "get used to a different way of life."

"Fogdoo has suffered serious partial paralysis. He will be able to recover partially as a result of physiotherapy and partially with drugs," Andren was quoted as saying.

Fogdoo, World Cup slalom champion in 1993, was training with the rest of the Swedish downhill team at Are — 300 kms from Umea — when he skied into a wood and apparently crashed into a tree.

#### Bubka fails new record

DONETSK, Ukraine (R) — Sergei Bubka easily defeated 11 opponents at an indoor pole vault meeting in his hometown on Sunday, but failed an attempt to break his world record.

The Ukrainian world champion cleared 5.90 metres at the first attempt and then stood by and watched arch-rival Igor Trandenkov of Russia miss three attempts at 6.0 metres. Bubka then had the bar set at 6.16 metres, one centimetre higher than the world record he set at the same meeting two years ago. But he failed in three attempts in front of 5,000 cheering fans, though he came close on two of the tries.

#### Vogts names new caps

HAMBURG (AFP) — Steffen Freund and Heiko Herrlich have been called up for the first time by Germany's national coach Berti Vogts for a friendly international against Spain next week.

Freund, a Borussia Dortmund midfielder, and Herrlich, a Borussia Moenchengladbach striker, join the squad for the match at Jerez de La Frontera on Feb. 22.

Vogts, yet to name a captain to replace the injured Lothar Matthaus, will choose another two players from Stefan Klos, Marcus Babbler, Christian Woerns, Mario Basler, Dieter Eilts, Joerg Albrecht and Fredi Bobic, after next Saturday's matches.

Vogts is expected to choose between Juventus defender Jurgen Kohler and Tottenham striker Jurgen Klinsmann for the captaincy.

## America's Cup gets serious in 3rd round

SAN DIEGO (AFP) — Through two preliminary rounds, skippers in the America's Cup trials have shrugged off every loss.

"Early is no time to panic," France 3 skipper Marc Pajot said after a first-round defeat.

Ok. Now it's time to panic.

The third round-robin for challengers and defenders begins Tuesday in the Pacific Ocean off San Diego.

And although no one with the possible exception of the still winless Spain will be eliminated when this round concludes, some teams will be pushed to the brink.

Wins in the first round were worth one point. Wins in the second round were worth two.

The ante doubles in the third round to four points per win.

Victories in the fourth and final challenger round-robin will be worth five points while the defender scoring escalates to seven points per win.

After the fourth round-robin, the challenger fleet will be culled to the top four boats. All three defenders advance, although the boat with the most round-robin points enters the semi-finals with two wins while the second-highest scoring boat goes into the semis with one win.

"I don't think you want to be the boat entering the semis without a win," said Young America skipper Kevin Mahaney.

"The third round-robin is the one that can make or break you," said OneAustralia skipper John Bertrand of the challenger side of the equation.

As it stands now, three challengers, Team New Zealand, Chris Dickson's NZL-39 and OneAustralia, have the inside track for semi-final berths in the Louis Vuitton Cup.

That could leave Nippon and France battling for the final spot. Presently, the difference between the fourth-place Japanese and the French is three points.

If the form of the first two rounds holds, France can move ahead of Nippon with a third-round victory over the Japanese.

But a French loss to Nippon could mean that France would have to upset one of the top three boats in addition to beating Nippon in the final round-robin.

On the defense end, the all-women crew sailing 1992 winner America3 has fallen behind its newer rivals Young America and Stars and Stripes. The problem is not the women's sailing ability but the boat.

America3 has a new boat coming, but it won't be ready until the fourth round, and that could be too late.

## Nigeria hit by FIFA decision

LAGOS (R) — Nigerian businessmen are counting the financial cost to Nigeria of FIFA's decision to cancel next month's youth soccer tournament in the West African nation.

"It is a big blow to Nigeria economically," said Uzor Okeke, director-general of the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria.

"We will not only lose in terms of the money we have spent preparing for the competition, we will not get the revenue from the anticipated boost in business activity during the event," he told Reuters.

Many entrepreneurs, from local art sellers and hoteliers to black market currency dealers, had hoped an influx of foreigners for the soccer fiesta would boost business in an otherwise slumbering economy.

"Many hotels have refurbished their facilities expecting to get lots of dollars," Adekunle Oluamide, director general of the Lagos Chamber of Commerce and Industry told Reuters.

Okeke said manufacturers were expecting the economy would receive a badly needed injection of hard currency from the championship which includes teams from Japan, the Netherlands, Portugal, Brazil and Argentina.

#### Spanish first division leading scorers

- 18 — Ivan Zamorano (Real Madrid)
- 14 — Meho Kodro (Real Sociedad)
- 11 — Davor Suker (Sevilla)
- 10 — Pedrag Mijatovic (Valencia), Angel Cuellar (Real Betis)
- 9 — Carlos Munoz (Real Oviedo)
- 8 Juan Pizzi (Tenerife), Juan Esneider (Real Zaragoza), Vladimir Gudelj (celta), Jose Zalazar (Albacete), Jose Amavisca (Real Madrid)

#### Italian first division scorers

- 17 — Qahriel Batistuta (Fiorentina)
- 13 — Abel Balbo (Roma), Sandro Tovaletti (Bari)
- 11 — Giuseppe signori (Lazio)
- 10 — Gianluca Viali (Juventus), Gianfranco Zola (Parma)
- 7 — Alen Boksic (Lazio), Alessandro Del Piero and Fabrizio Ravanelli (Both Juventus)



## Israel to allow direct election of PNA chief

JERICHO (Agencies) — Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) agreed at their first talks in this self-rule enclave Monday that the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) head would be directly elected.

PLO negotiator Saeb Erakat said Israel had given way on the PLO demand, the first partial agreement between the two sides in eight months of talks on delayed Palestinian elections.

Israel had previously insisted that the PNA chairman should be appointed by a self-rule council, which is also to be elected.

But the Palestinians pushed for the direct election of the chairman at the same time as the poll for the autonomy council.

The agreement meant that when Palestinian voters mark their ballots in self-rule elections, they will vote separately for the president and an autonomy council.

The agreement was a nod to Yasser Arafat, who has long sought two separate ballots in autonomy elections: one for the self-rule council and the other for the president of the legislative body.

The title is seen as a symbolic step towards Mr. Arafat's goal of heading an independent state. He was designated "president of Palestine" by PLO bodies in 1988, but the title was not widely accepted abroad.

"I consider this to be a significant step in the right direction," said Dr. Erakat, a minister in the PNA.

The agreement on a key election issue came at a meeting between Dr. Erakat and Yoel Zinger, an Israeli foreign ministry official — the first such negotiation held inside the autonomy area.

Under the Israel-PLO accord, Israel was to have pulled troops out of West Bank cities and cleared the way for elections by last July. However, Israel has resisted moving ahead with a troop withdrawal because of concerns about security in the wake of a series of attacks by militants.

The two sides also agreed that hundreds of observers would be brought to monitor elections — including representatives from Arab countries.

Dr. Erakat said election talks would resume in Cairo on Feb. 21, when the two sides would try to resolve numerous disagreements that remain.

Among the outstanding questions are how many members will be on the council and whether Jerusalem residents will take part in the elections.

The two sides failed to agree Monday on whether militant groups like the Islamic fundamentalist Hamas group, which violently oppose the peace process, should be allowed to run for office.

"The elections are purely Palestinian and if they will be democratic elections, every Palestinian will have the right to participate in them no matter what his beliefs are," Dr. Erakat said.

The Israelis, however, see the participation of militants in the elections as a recipe for disaster in the peace process.

"We want to make sure the elections are democratic," said Mr. Zinger. "But we do not want to see individuals or groups who call for Israel's destruction participate."

Dr. Erakat, Palestinian local government minister, said a general agreement on elections was now in sight.

"There are still some sticking points but we think we'll be able to conclude in a few weeks," he said.

Mr. Zinger agreed that "if we accelerate the work, we'll be able to finish very soon," adding, however, that "sometimes the details take longer time than expected."

But no date has been fixed for the elections. The Palestinians want Israel to redeploy outside Arab areas on the West Bank before the poll takes place, in line with the 1993 declaration of principles on autonomy.

Israel, however, has balked at a troop redeployment, fearing it would leave its 130,000 settlers on the West Bank vulnerable to attack.

## King hosts iftar

HIS MAJESTY King Hussein on Monday hosted an iftar at Basman Palace for notables and representatives of various organisations in Madaba Governorate. The banquet was attended by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, His Royal Highness Prince Hamzah Bin Al Hussein, Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shakar, Royal Court Chief Marwan Al Qasem and other senior officials. The King and the guests attended prayers before the banquet (Petra photo)



## Sawt Al Shaab suspends publication

By Sae'da Keilani  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The board of directors of the Dar Al Shaab Company on Monday decided to suspend the publication of the loss-making Sawt Al Shaab Arabic-language daily with immediate effect but to continue the commercial operations of the company's printing press.

The future of Sawt Al Shaab, Jordan's fourth national daily with a circulation of less than 20,000, will be decided on Feb. 27, when the general assembly — where the government owns a controlling interest — meets to discuss available options.

However, barring a last-minute change of mind on the part of the Ministry of Industry and Trade, the company is most likely to be liquidated in line with a decision already taken by the government, which controls 67 per cent of the shares.

Abdul Hai Majali, chairman of the board of directors, who represents the private sector along with three others in the 11-member decision-making body, said a decision would be taken at the Feb. 27 meeting whether to restructure the troubled 12-year-old company or to liquidate it.

The salaries and rights of the 180 employees of the firm are assured and protected until a decision is taken, Mr. Majali told the Jordan Times.

A key reason that prompted the suspension was the lack of funds to buy newsprint, a senior official of the company said.

No comment was immediately available from the government. But Minister of Industry and Trade Ali Abul Ragheb told the Lower House of Parliament on Sunday that the government was determined to liquidate the company.

The proposal, made in July 1994, was drawn up upon a suggestion by the Ministry of Industry and Trade, according to Mr. Majali. "It came as a surprise to us when the government now decided to liquidate the company," he said.

Mr. Majali said the decision to suspend the publication of the daily was taken unanimously by the board of directors although the private sector and public sector representatives in the board differed on how to solve the problem.

The history of Sawt Al Shaab is very controversial. The newspaper has had 13 chairmen and nine chief editors since its establishment in 1982.

Deputy Toujan Faisal (Amman), who raised the issue of the newspaper in Parliament on Sunday, accused the government on

mined to liquidate the company. The company lost more than three-fourths of its JD 2 million capital in the last five years. The loss was incurred in the operations of Sawt Al Shaab while the commercial printing division of the firm continued to make profits.

Mr. Majali said the private sector representatives in the board of directors favoured a restructuring of the company. He said the board had proposed that the capital be reduced to \$500,000, which would be set aside, and that the company issue fresh stock worth JD 2.7 million and raise the capital to JD 3.2 million.

This would allow the company to settle its problem of debts, estimated at JD 2 million against assets worth JD 1 million, and launch fresh operations after internal reorganisation, according to Mr. Majali.

(Continued on page 7)

## AFM hopes to ease foreign capital rules

AMMAN (R) — The director general of the Amman stock exchange said on Monday he hoped for early approval of a new investment law that will end the need for cabinet approval of stock purchases by a foreigner.

Omayya Touqan said foreign investors who were approved under the existing law continue to show interest in the Amman Financial Market (AFM) but others were awaiting approval of the new law.

"There is a new law for investments which is now at the prime minister's office which does away with the requirement that a non-Jordanian should get permission before buying stocks," Dr. Touqan told a financial conference.

"It is our problem to pass that law in parliament, and I think it will pass, so we have to do that as soon as possible," he said.

Dr. Touqan told Reuters later there was no precise schedule for passing the law but the target was approval before a Middle East economic conference scheduled for Amman at the end of October.

At present foreign investors need approval from the Jordanian cabinet to buy on the local stock market. Bankers say there have been no fresh approvals for months as discussion of the new investment law has proceeded.

Despite the proposed liberalisation, Dr. Touqan said the new law would retain a 49 per cent limit on foreign holdings of Jordanian quoted companies, although he would prefer the removal of all barriers to investment.

Financial experts in Jordan have talked of a strong debate inside the government over allowing foreign investment, which could help a country that has traditionally suffered a balance of payments deficit.

"This is the way to get foreign savings," said Dr. Touqan, whose stock exchange is a government institution. "That's why we don't understand why anybody in the government might be against this."

Despite the obstacles to investment in Jordan and a poor market performance for the past 18 months, Dr. Touqan said foreign investors — mainly representing Western pension funds — remained interested in long-term investment.

Dr. Touqan said the Jordanian-Israeli conflict, finally ended by a peace treaty last October, had been a major obstacle to attracting foreign investment.

"Foreign investment has been almost zero for the past 45 years," he said. "Now, with the peace, that (obstacle) is out of the way."

## Talibans threaten Hekmatyar stronghold

KABUL (AFP) — The Taliban militant movement captured three main towns in Logar province Monday, moving closer to Charasayab, the headquarters of Hezbe-Islami chief Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, a Defence Ministry official said.

There was, however, no independent confirmation of the spokesman's report.

A Hezbe-Islami spokesman in Islamabad, Mangal Hussain, said fighting was in progress Monday at Baraki Barak, southwest of Pule Alam, capital of Logar province. But he could not confirm or deny the fall of the main city.

A joint force of Taliban and dissident Mujahideen seized control of Pule Alam and the districts of Khoshi and Kolangar from the Hezbe-Islami, Defence Ministry spokesman Abdullah said.

Pule Alam is 25 kilometres to the south of Mr. Hekmatyar's headquarters.

Mr. Abdullah said there was still fighting in Tangi Waghjan, a strategic gorge, approximately 15 kilometres away from Charasayab.

## Peres details push to get Rabin to talk to Arafat

TEL AVIV (AP) — Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, in a new book published this week described Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin as "over-suspicious" and says he had to labour for months to convince Mr. Rabin to talk directly to the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

In the memoir "Battling For Peace," Mr. Peres claims credit for the ideas that led to the establishment last May of Palestinian autonomy in the Gaza Strip and Jericho.

The book appeared in part an attempt to settle scores over Mr. Rabin's 1979 memoirs — scathingly critical of Mr. Peres for allegedly undermining his authority during his first stint as premier in the 1970s.

"Rabin is a man of solid intellectual gifts, but some of us feel he tends to be over-suspicious," Mr. Peres wrote, quoting from his 1970s diary describing the rising army

officer as "hesitant... too cautious, and his personal relationships too bound up in the past."

The book, excerpts from which were published in the daily Haaretz Monday, could rekindle a recently dormant feud between the two leaders who are leading Israel's drive for peace with the Arabs and shared the 1994 Nobel Peace Prize with PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat.

Rabin spokesman Oded Ben-Ami and Benny Cohen refused comment on the book.

Mr. Peres served as defence minister in Mr. Rabin's first cabinet in 1974-77, reversing roles in 1984-86 when Mr. Peres headed a government in which their Labour Party shared power with the right-wing Likud.

Mr. Peres unsuccessfully urged Mr. Rabin to drop Israel's boycott of the PLO in August 1992, two months after Labour won elections.

Mr. Rabin continued talks in Washington begun by the previous government of Yitzhak Shamir with a delegation of Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza. But Mr. Peres wrote the Palestinians were receiving their orders from Mr. Arafat, who, from exile in Tunis, was determined to impede the talks.

"My cabinet colleagues, including the prime minister, believed that the indigenous Palestinian leadership... would gradually gain stature and independence and would be able to negotiate without the close and stifling supervision of the PLO. I believed they were mistaken," Mr. Peres wrote.

In January 1993, Mr. Peres told Mr. Rabin that Israel "must take bold steps towards negotiations with the PLO," he wrote. Mr. Peres then proposed the idea of offering the PLO the squalid Gaza Strip and a small area in the West Bank as an autonomous test-case.

"I suggested that we propose to Arafat and his staff that they move to Gaza (and) represent the Palestinians directly... my criticism of the Washington talks was that we were trying to reach a declaration of principles without any reference to specific territorial issues."

Mr. Peres wooed approval for low-level talks under the aegis of an academic conference in Oslo, Norway. His ideas, fleshed out in months of secretive negotiations in Oslo, led to the Sept. 13, 1993 Israel-PLO accord and the Gaza-Jericho autonomy in May.

But throughout, Mr. Rabin "moved slowly and warily," Mr. Peres wrote. "He was sceptical of the Oslo talks, sometimes he wholly disbelieved in them." At one point, Mr. Peres wrote, Mr. Rabin confessed that "he doubted anything would come of Oslo."

Mr. Khan, a divisional chief of his party, also called on Britain and Sweden to extradite authors Salman Rushdie and Taslima Nasrin, both accused by fundamentalist Muslims of insulting Islam and threatening with death.

"These people have hurt the feelings and religious beliefs of... millions of Muslims all over the world," said Mr. Khan, Jamaat-E-Islami, which is fiercely anti-American, barely manages to win three or four parliamentary seats in elections in Pakistan. However, political leaders are wary of them because of their ability to mobilise public opinion.

Irish police dogs and a helicopter, Irish authorities launched a manhunt Sunday for the suspected killer of a five-year-old boy. The child was stabbed to death overnight Saturday by a man who entered the boy's home in Naas, 30 kilometres (20 miles) southwest of Dublin.

Modern art show marks re-opening of Uffizi room

FLORENCE, Italy (R) — The works of more than 60 contemporary artists went on display in the Uffizi Gallery to mark the re-opening of a room in the Renaissance Palace that was badly damaged by a bomb in 1993.

"Today a sad chapter in the history of the Uffizi has closed," gallery director Anna Maria Petrucci told reporters at an inauguration ceremony. The exhibition, entitled "compensation," is being held in the freshly-restored "Royal Mail Room", whose 250-metre long glass roof was blasted to smithereens in the explosion.

## Egyptian unionists stage protest against unions law

CAIRO (R) — Hundreds of Egyptians, some saying the government pushing them to the abyss, held a sit-in on Monday to protest against a law which could end their control over the professional unions.

Parliament passed the amended law on Sunday, less than one week after a member of parliament first proposed it and riding roughshod over the views of the Islamist-dominated unions. (see page 2).

The amendment to the law gives the judiciary wide powers to supervise union elections, including the right to delegate these powers to policemen and government officials.

"The Egyptian regime is pushing things to the edge of the abyss and we have no alternative but to go to the abyss with them," Doctor Magdi Khalifa told some 500 fundamentalist doctors in the sit-in at their union headquarters.

The amendment was part of a "ferocious campaign launched against the Islamists," he added. "Declaring civil disobedience and strikes are the readiest options we have."

The professional associations are one of the few political platforms in Egypt accessible to fundamentalists, particularly the outlawed Muslim Brotherhood, which has gained control of many of them in recent years.

They compete with the government for public sympathy by providing aid to the poor and unemployed. After an earthquake in 1992, the unions were faster than the state in setting up tents and helping victims.

Even a government newspaper questioned the unexpected haste with which the ruling National Democratic Party drafted the amendment and pushed it through parliament.

"What is the secret behind the government's wish to pass these amendments through parliament with the speed of an express train without stopping at the constitutional stations?" asked Mostafa Amin, founder and columnist at Al Akhbar.

Opposition newspapers kept up their attacks on the government's behaviour.

"The government plants a time-bomb inside the professional unions," said the Islamist newspaper Al Ahrar.

"New escalation in confrontation between the government and unions," said a

(Continued on page 7)

## Iraq commemorates bombing of shelter

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Iraqis demonstrated here Monday to commemorate the fourth anniversary of the U.S. bombing of an air-raid shelter which killed more than 400 civilians. A candle-lit procession was held at Al Amriya shelter which has remained untouched since it was gutted by U.S. bombs on Feb. 13, 1991, during the Gulf war. Several hundred young Iraqis marched past the air-raid shelter on Sunday evening carrying pictures of the victims. Iraq said the bombing of the two-storey concrete shelter killed 403 people. The Pentagon said at the time that if the shelter had been hit, it was because it looked like a military bunker. Later Washington did not rule out that some civilians may have been killed.

## Egypt, Palestinians to set up chamber

CAIRO (AFP) — Egypt and the Palestinian Authority are set to create a joint chamber of commerce to boost links between the Egyptian private sector and Palestinian businessmen, officials said here Monday. "No date has been fixed yet but we are waiting for a visit from the Palestinian association of chambers of commerce after the end of Ramadan (in early March) to discuss this issue," Cairo chamber of commerce head Mustafa Zaki told AFP. "This chamber is needed because it will allow us to create a mechanism to promote trade exchanges between the Egyptian private sector and the autonomous territories." He added there were wide-ranging possibilities for economic cooperation, particularly in infrastructure projects in the self-rule areas of the Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho. Trade between Egypt and the Gaza Strip reached \$200,000 in 1993, made up of \$150,000 of Egyptian exports compared with \$50,000 of imports.

## Israeli troops suffering 'breakdowns'

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Soldiers based near the site of a deadly double suicide bombing where many witnessed the deaths of their colleagues in January have been suffering nervous breakdowns, a daily paper said Monday. Some of them serving at the base near the Beit Lid crossroads north of Tel Aviv have had to be hospitalised following the Jan. 22 bombing which killed 20 soldiers and one other Israeli. The Maan newspaper said. A few have returned home unable to face going back to the base, while others asked to be transferred to bases far from the scene, the paper said dubbing the phenomenon the "Beit Lid syndrome." An

army spokesman refused to comment on the issue to AFP. Several soldiers told Maariv that they grew very anxious if they had to approach the "crossroads of deaths."

## 3,000 under arrest in southern Egypt

MINYA (AFP) — Police have arrested 3,000 people in the past month in the troubled southern region of Minya and the crackdown is due to intensify after last week's arrival of 7,000 new officers, police said Monday. Most of those arrested were aged between 17 and 25 and were mainly pupils from secondary schools in the province, especially in Mallawi and Abu Qurqas. The detainees are being held in a security forces camp in the town of Minya on the edge of the Nile about 250 kilometres south of Cairo. The province has become the new stronghold for militants waging a bloody anti-government campaign since they were chased out of the neighbouring area of Assiut in the autumn.

## Working group to meet in Cairo

CAIRO (Petra) — The regional economic working group which includes Jordan, Egypt, the Palestine National Authority and Israel will meet in Cairo Wednesday to select the group's headquarters.

## Jordanian, Egyptian experts to meet

CAIRO (Petra) — The Joint Jordanian-Egyptian trade committee will meet in Cairo at the level of experts to prepare lists of commodities that might be added to the trade protocol between the two countries in the beginning of March. The committee will also meet on the sidelines of the Joint Jordanian-Egyptian Higher Committee, which will be chaired by the prime ministers of the two countries in the end of March.

## Dense fog in Turkey paralyzes Bosphorus

ISTANBUL (R) — Almost 200 ships queued at the Bosphorus Strait on Monday after dense fog in Turkey shut down the vital shipping link and also disrupted road and air travel. Around 90 ships were waiting at the southern entrance to the waterway linking the Black Sea and the Sea of Marmara and more than 100 were at the northern entrance, a Turkish maritime official said. "We are checking vision on the Bosphorus every half hour to let the waiting vessels pass today and eliminate the queues on both sides of the strait," he said, adding that the waterway had been closed to traffic since mid-day on Sunday.

## COLUMN

### U.K. woman charged with kidnapping baby

RHYL, Wales (AFP) — Authorities charged a 39-year-old woman with kidnapping a new-born baby from a Welsh hospital, police said. The baby girl, named Lydia, was found safe and sound Saturday, a day after being taken from Bodelwyddan Hospital near this north Wales town. Following a telephone tip-off, police said they found the baby Saturday in a house in Rhyl. They arrested a woman and three men who were inside the house. The men were later released without being charged. Lydia, who was born Tuesday, was taken after her mother Christina Owens, 32, was approached in the hospital by a woman she thought was a visitor. Police, backed by volunteers and an air force rescue helicopter, launched a massive search around the hospital and surrounding countryside. The case dominated newspaper headlines in Britain Saturday. It came only two months after former dental nurse Julie Kelley, 22, was given three years' probation for snatching new-born Abbie Humphries from a ward at the Queens Medical Centre, Nottingham, central England, last July. Abbie was recovered just over two weeks later, after a nationwide hunt, at Kelley's home, not far from the hospital.

### Pakistan group calls Jackson, Madonna cultural terrorists

ISLAMABAD (AP) — Michael Jackson and Madonna should be tried in Pakistan as terrorists, a religious party official said in response to the capture of a suspect in the World Trade Centre bombing. "Michael Jackson and Madonna are the torchbearers of American society, their cultural and social values," said Neamatullah Khan of the Jamaat-E-Islami or Party of Islam. "They are ruining the lives of thousands of Muslims and leading them to destruction, away from their religion, ethics and morality." Ramzi Yousef was arrested last Tuesday at a hotel in Islamabad, Pakistan, and extradited to New York. Mr. Yousef, an Iraqi, is alleged to be the mastermind of the Feb. 26, 1993, World Trade Centre bombing in New York that left six dead and some 1,000 injured. He pleaded innocent Thursday and is scheduled to make another court appearance this week. Mr. Khan, a divisional chief of his party, also called on Britain and Sweden to extradite authors Salman Rushdie and Taslima Nasrin, both accused by fundamentalist Muslims of insulting Islam and threatening with death.

"These people have hurt the feelings and religious beliefs of... millions of Muslims all over the world," said Mr. Khan, Jamaat-E-Islami, which is fiercely anti-American, barely manages to win three or four parliamentary seats in elections in Pakistan. However, political leaders are wary of them because of their ability to mobilise public opinion.

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